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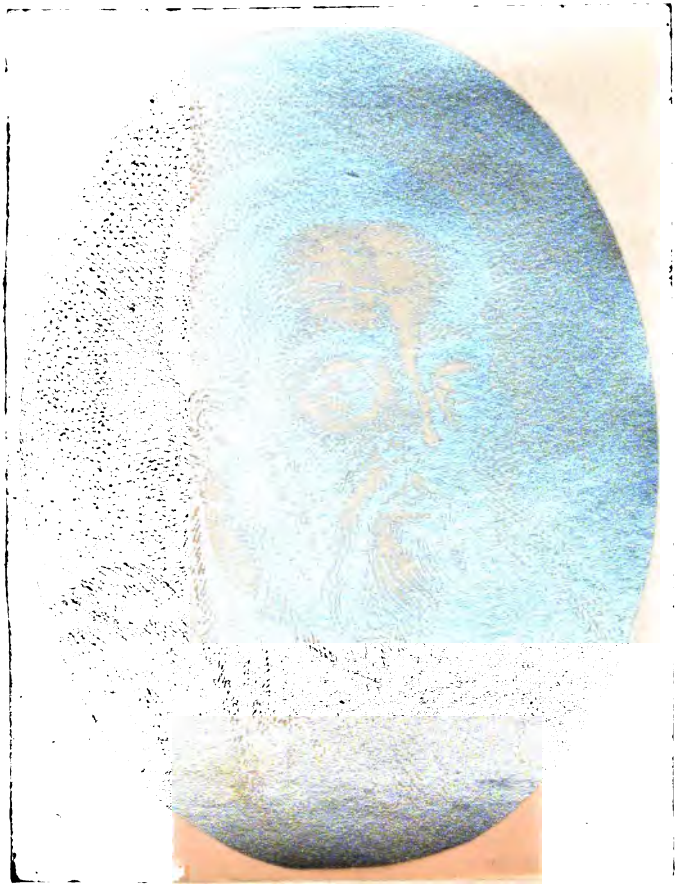

BERNARD GILPIN.

From an Engraving prefixed to the 1753 Edition of Prebendary Gilpin's Life of Bernard Gilpin.

Front.

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MEMOIRS

OF

BERNARD GILPIN,

PARSON OF HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING AND
APOSTLE OF THE NORTH.

BY THE

REV. C. S. COLLINGWOOD,

RECTOR OF SOUTHWICK, SUNDERLAND,
AND FORMERLY FELLOW OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, DURHAM.

LONDON:
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL & CO.
SUNDERLAND: HILLS & CO., HIGH STREET WEST.
1884.

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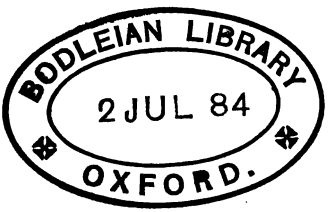
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PREFACE.

ON March 4, 1584, Bernard Gilpin died. It is therefore three hundred years this year since that event; and if a new biography is needed, a better time than the tercentenary year of his death could not be chosen.

Gilpin has not lacked biographers. His relative Bishop Carlton was the first to undertake the task, and in his quaint pages perhaps better than anywhere else we have a reproduction of Gilpin as he lived and spoke. This Life, written originally in Latin, was soon translated into the vulgar tongue and went through several editions. Wordsworth in his "Ecclesiastical Biography," vol. iv., reproduces Carlton's work. Another relative, a collateral descendant, William Gilpin, subsequently Prebendary Gilpin, published a Life of Bernard Gilpin in 1749, which has been the authority on the subject ever since. He had apparently many family documents to refer to, and enjoyed opportunities of obtaining authentic information such as are not available now. This work is composed in the easy pleasant style of which the

writer was master; it is a valuable book, and has been two or three times reprinted. In Prebendary Gilpin's Autobiography, published within recent years by the Cumberland and Westmoreland Antiquarian and Archæological Society, he states that he wrote and published this Life in order to clear off some college debts, the results of no fault of his own, and amounting to about £70; and that the profits on the sale effected this object.*

About sixty years ago Edward Irving seems to have had the intention of writing another Life of Bernard Gilpin; but on inquiries, he could not obtain any further information than what was contained in William Gilpin's pages, and concluding that "nothing more existed in any quarter," he contented himself with a reprint of that work, prefixing a long and elaborate preface of his own.

In 1836 a Mr. Lewins, then resident at Houghton-le-Spring, brought out what professed to be a new Life of Gilpin, but which is really only William Gilpin and water.

In chapter xiv. p. 300, I have alluded to the excellent abridgment of the Prebendary's work which John Wesley published in his series of "Memoirs of Eminent Christians." Both Hutchinson and Surtees in their Histories of Durham have given lengthened accounts of the famous Rector of Houghton; Tweddell in the "Bards and Authors of Cleveland and South

* Gilpin's *Memoirs*, p. 113.

Durham and the Vicinage," devotes upwards of twenty pages to his biography; and last, but not least, Serjeant Atkinson supplies a lengthened account of Gilpin's life in the "Worthies of Westmoreland," * which, however, contains little that is not embodied in Gilpin's book.

I do not attempt to enumerate other minor efforts at perpetuating Gilpin's fame; it is clear enough that he has not gone unrecorded.

Then why write another Life? I will make no elaborate apology, but only say that most of the books referred to are not easily attainable; that the present season of his tercentenary is a proper one for recalling Gilpin's memory; and that possibly my readers will find that in the present work Gilpin's life has some little new light thrown upon it. I add nothing more on this point, except that if it should be my privilege by means of these "Memoirs,"—to a large extent the fruits of an autumn holiday in a quiet little village in Norfolk,—to draw renewed attention to one of "the worthies of England," and by his example to encourage any of the present generation to be gentle and true, to be daring and faithful, I shall not have written in vain.

The Gilpins are a remarkable family; during three or four centuries they have been producing able and valuable men, and probably the vigour of the stock is not yet exhausted.

* Vol. i. pp. 231–278.

Galton, in his work "On Hereditary Genius," under the head of "Divines" mentions Bernard Gilpin and his family as an illustration of his theory of the transmission of genius. After quoting Bishop Tunstall and Richard Gilpin of Greystoke and William Gilpin as distinguished members of the family, he continues, "his relationships are good but distant," and regrets that he knows nothing about the intervening relations; adding, "I wish I did, for I should expect to find that the Gilpin blood had produced other noteworthy results." *

It is not impossible to do something to fill up the gaps which Galton laments, and to carry the record further up and further down the genealogical tree.

Bernard Gilpin's great-grandfather, William Gilpin, was a man of great influence in his day and locality; he died about 1472. Whatever Bishop Tunstall owed to the Gilpin blood, perhaps his gentle loving disposition he derived from an earlier offshoot than Gilpin's generation. Bishop Carlton was a distinguished man, and he seems to have been a son or grandson of Gilpin's cousin, thus also, like Tunstall, going further up the tree. Henry Airy, Provost of Queen's, and notable in his time, was a grandson of Gilpin's half-sister; and there must have been something specially admirable in that William Airy connected in the same line, who for so many years was the faithful and trusted servant and friend of the

* Galton on *Hereditary Genius*, p. 286.

Rector of Houghton. Bernard's brother George was a famous diplomatist; and coming further down, and omitting those names which Dalton has already recorded, we meet with Benjamin West, the painter, a collateral descendant, and Charles Gilpin in our own days, the well-known philanthropist and member for Northampton.

But the Gilpin blood has crossed the Atlantic, and is making itself felt on the other side of the sea. A Gilpin went out with William Penn, and a descendant of his—not to speak of others who may be doing good work elsewhere, or who may have done it in former generations—was a few years since wielding a great influence in the then infant colony of Denver, Colorado, and may be doing so still.

Hepworth Dixon* speaks of this worthy scion of the Gilpin stock as the ruling spirit of the colony, and whose influence was only good. "A certain William Gilpin," he says, "is perhaps the most noticeable man on the plains; and it would hardly be a figure of speech to say that his office in Denver (a small room in the Planter's House, which serves him for a bedroom, for a hall of audience, for a workshop, and the upper ten thousand of Colorado generally for a spitoon) is the high school of politics for the gold regions and the mountain districts. By birth Gilpin is a Pennsylvanian; by nature and habit, a state-founder. Descended from one of the best

* *New America*, i. 134.

Quaker families of his State (his ancestor was the Gilpin who came out with Penn and Logan), taught by history the need of that large and graceful tolerance of religious sentiment which Penn displayed in the court of Charles II., and which the Friends have put into practice on the Susquehannah, and armed by Nature with abundant gifts of genius, patience, insight, eloquence, enthusiasm, he has played, and he is now playing, a singular and dramatic part in this Western country: under this man's sway the city is changed, and is changing fast." One of this branch of the family, probably, was a much-trusted aide-de-camp of Washington.

Towards the close of the last century another Gilpin emigrated—John Bernard Gilpin, a son of Prebendary Gilpin. He settled in Philadelphia and married there, and, when his father described him, was giving every token of becoming the head of an influential and wealthy family.* Subsequently he became British Consul at Rhode Island. Some of his descendants are, I am informed, settled in Nova Scotia, among whom may be mentioned Dr. Gilpin and Archdeacon Gilpin, both of Halifax; but others in all probability are to be found in various parts of the United States.

In running one's eye down the Gilpin genealogy,†

* See Warner's *Literary Recollections*, i. 366, and *Gilpin Memoirs*, Preface, p. v.

† Published by the Cumberland and Westmoreland Antiquarian and Archæological Society with the *Gilpin Memoirs*.

it is remarkable how many large families are to be found therein. Bernard Gilpin himself was one of eleven children; his eldest brother had twelve children; Richard of Graystoke, the author of the "Dæmonologia," had thirteen, and one of his sons had nine. John Bernard Gilpin, born in 1701, had fifteen children; one of his daughters had ten; one of his grandsons fourteen, and another eleven; and the same thing is observable in other branches.

The consequence is that the Gilpin connection is a very wide one, and collateral descendants of Bernard Gilpin are to be found in every part of the country. The actual name Gilpin itself is not so common, but, under the surnames of Farish, and Farrer, and Fawcett, and Dacre, and Browne, and Brisco, and Cookson, and Sawrey, and Airy in all its spellings, and Layton, and Wharton, and West, and Maude, and Ogden, &c., the Gilpin strain survives; and it is not too much to say that there is hardly one of the very numerous collateral descendants of Bernard who does not feel a worthy pride in tracing back to the Rector of Houghton.

The Apostle of the North seems to have been the first member of the house to bear the name of Bernard, but since his fame there have been few generations of the Gilpins and their collateral branches in which one or more members have not received the Christian name of Bernard. As early as 1607, that is, within twenty-three years of his

death, the name begins to appear in the Kendal registers; in this year the baptism of the son of one Bernard Gilpin is recorded; and in the register of Newbold, East Riding of York (see Appendix B), on November 24, 1623, a certain Bernard Gilpin is stated to have married Ann Robinson of Hull; and so it has gone on down to our own day. John Bernard Gilpin, mentioned just now, took the name with him to America, and, determined to perpetuate it, when one son Bernard died in infancy, called another by the same name; and the American branch of the family, no more than the English, will not willingly let it die. Here at home I know of at least two collateral descendants at the present moment, who, with their other names, perpetuate the memory of Bernard Gilpin. I doubt whether it is a common thing to find the memory of a distinguished ancestor, collateral or direct, thus continued in the nomenclature of families for nine or ten generations.

Within recent years Durham Cathedral has been adorned with a Gilpin window. It is on the left hand as you enter the nave by the north door, and comprises three pictures arranged above each other, representing—Gilpin giving away his horse—quelling the feud in Rothbury Church—and founding Houghton Grammar School.

In bringing this preface to a conclusion, I would place on record my thanks to all those who have assisted me in the production of the present volume.

I do not wish to omit any names, and if any are omitted it will, I hope, be attributed to the right cause, namely, inadvertence. The following list, then, comprises, as far as my recollection and documents serve me, all who have helped in one way or another: John Booth, Esq., Deputy Registrar of Durham, whose assistance has been invaluable; W. Hylton Longstaffe, Esq., of Gateshead; the Hon. and Rev. Canon Grey, Rector of Houghton; Sir C. Trevelyan, Bart., of Wallington Hall; the Rev. T. F. Paterson, Curate of Houghton,—(the account of Houghton town in chapter VI. is almost entirely compiled from materials supplied by Mr. Paterson); the Rev. Alexander Bennett, head-master of Houghton Grammar School; Miss Boyd, of Moor House, Rainton; T. W. U. Robinson, Esq. of Houghton; the Rev. Canon Greenwell, of Durham; E. C. Robertson, Esq., of Otterburn; the Rev. Dr. Hooppell, Rector of Byers Green; the Rev. J. Low Low, Vicar of Whittonstall; J. M. Ogden, Esq., of Sunderland; the Rev. R. J. Clarke, Librarian of Queen's College, Oxford; Robert Brown, Esq., of Sunderland; C. Bernard Gilpin, Esq., of Lasswade, Edinburgh; and Captain E. A. White, of Old Elvet, Durham.

C. S. COLLINGWOOD.

SOUTHWICK RECTORY, SUNDERLAND,
March 4, 1884.

[The three hundredth anniversary of the death of Bernard Gilpin.]

ILLUSTRATIONS.

		PAGE
PORTRAIT OF BERNARD GILPIN	*facing title-page.*	
GILPIN IN ROTHBURY CHURCH	*facing*	149
HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING GRAMMAR SCHOOL	*do.*	171

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

Birth and family—Kentmere and the Gilpin property—The begging friar—Oxford, the New Learning—Corpus Christi and Cardinal College—Erasmus—The Brethren—Politico-ecclesiastical events—Sir Thomas More—Articles of 1536—Gilpin and the New Learning—Sir Thomas More's execution—His home at Chelsea—Gilpin studying Erasmus—Erasmus' views and desires—Gilpin and Erasmus, and the Bible—Gilpin removes to Cardinal College—Gilpin and Luther—The "Six Articles"—The Papal Supremacy to More and Gilpin—Erasmus' New Testament—The foundation-stone 1–21

CHAPTER II.

Hopes from a general council—Oxford and the Reformation—Discussion with Peter Martyr—Result of this discussion—Peter Martyr on Gilpin—Gilpin's inquiries—The Eucharist—The Supremacy—Fixing doctrine at Council of Trent—Scripture his guide—"The last ounce"—Changes his views very slowly—Gilpin's letter to his brother—Observes the errors of the Papacy—Goes abroad—Appointed to Easington—Reforms refused in Queen Mary's days—Accused to the Bishop of Durham—Signs the Articles in Elizabeth's reign—More settled in his views—Disinclined to signing Articles—Gilpin's difficulties—His apostolic spirit 22–43

CHAPTER III.

PAGE

Appointed to Norton—Preaches before the King—The freedom of the pulpit—Gilpin's sermon—The oppression of the poor—The great Barabbases—His sermon wins him friends—The Bible the source of Divine knowledge—Cecil—Bishop Tunstall—Tunstall and Erasmus—Gilpin goes to Norton—His doctrinal difficulties—He goes abroad—Will not have a dispensation—Tunstall's book on the Eucharist—Gilpin and Norton—Norton and Stockton 44–60

CHAPTER IV.

Gilpin in search of truth—At Louvain—Queen Mary's death—Gilpin and his brother George—Letter to Bishop Tunstall, who had offered him a living—Gilpin at Paris—Discussions with Neal—Gilpin's views still undecided—He returns to England—The Marian persecutions—"The troubles at Frankfort"—Death of Queen Mary 61–73

CHAPTER V.

Bishop Tunstall—His death—Tunstall no persecutor—Gilpin Rector of Easington—His perplexities—His work—Gilpin as archdeacon—Condition of the clergy—Clerical neglect—Non-residence and pluralities—Specimens of pluralists—All this a great distress to Gilpin—Will not hold his peace—Bible tasks set to the clergy—Gilpin cries aloud and spares not—The clergy up in arms—Gilpin charged with heresy—He resigns his preferment—Gilpin and Luther—"He hath more learning than you all"—Cardinal Pole's proposed reforms—Pole's proposals come to nothing—Latter days of Mary's reign—Gilpin led "by a path he knew not" 74–96

CHAPTER VI.

Appointed to Houghton—Dates of his appointments—Houghton-le-Spring—The Church—The Rectory—The people—Repairs of the Rectory—Offered a Canonry of Durham—Charged with heresy—Tunstall less friendly—Charged before Bonner with heresy—Gilpin's preparations for martyrdom—Urged to make his escape—Gilpin on his way to London—His broken leg and escape—Houghton the scene of his work—Free from his enemies 97–115

CHAPTER VII.

PAGE

Queen Elizabeth and the Reform—Her prudent measures—The Romanists and Church of England—Gilpin preaches before the Commission—Hesitates about signing the Articles—Subscribes—Death of his curate—Offered the Bishopric of Carlisle—Urged to accept, but declines it—Alleged reasons why he refused—Real reasons of refusal—Declines Provostship of Queen's College—Decides on staying at Houghton—Gilpin's reverence for Scripture—Fitted to be a leader of men 116–129

CHAPTER VIII.

Resolved to do his duty—Decides on having a grammar school—His work as parson of Houghton—A friend and brother to his people—Letter to Mrs. Carr—Gilpin and John Barnes—Edward Irving on Gilpin—Goldsmith's Village Preacher—Gilpin's hospitalities—No public provision for the poor—Value of the living of Houghton—Frugal as well as generous—Guarding the revenues of his living—Gilpin's friends at Houghton—Good rectors of Houghton—His preaching and labours—His influence and memory 130–148

CHAPTER IX.

Religion in the north of England—Neglected condition of the parishes—Itinerant preaching—The debatable country—Tynedale and Redesdale—The robbers of the Borders—Priests as bad as people—Bishop Fox's "Monition"—The deadly feud—Bad traits and good ones—Conscionable brigands—John Knox, Gilpin, Cameron—Changes in the Border people—Much improved in recent times—Gilpin's Tynedale and Redesdale labours—Rothbury and the deadly feud—The challenge-glove—A Redesdale congregation—Gilpin's horse stolen—His influence in the Dales—Circumstances against the Dalesmen—Gilpin a hard worker for God . . 149–170

CHAPTER X.

Colet's Grammar School—Educational ideas and wants—Houghton must have a grammar school—Elementary education—Need of a learned clergy—Other educational provision—Sunday teaching—Education at Houghton—The Kepier Grammar School—Endowment of the school—Letter about the school property—The

PAGE

charter of the school—The school statutes—Gilpin's interest in the scholars—Hugh Broughton—Distinguished pupils—Education on a religious basis—Good results from grammars chools 171–195

CHAPTER XI.

Gilpin and the Puritans—Irregularities in Church services—Puritan bishops and dignitaries—Divisions among the Reformers—Gilpin and the Puritans—A Cambridge proselytiser—Thomas Cartwright—Gilpin and Dr. Birch—Cartwright and Whitgift—The rebellion of 1569—Outbreak of the rebellion—Setting up the Romish service—The clergy and the rebellion—The day of vengeance—A reign of terror—Gilpin and the rebellion—The rebels at Houghton—Gilpin urging leniency—The Roman schism 196–214

CHAPTER XII.

Gilpin's home and friends—The order of his household—The life at Houghton Rectory—Bishop Pilkington—Gilpin and Bishop Pilkington—Pilkington's death—Thomas Lever—Happy and useful years—The plague at Houghton and Oxford—A question of conscience referred to the Bishop—A good servant . . 215–230

CHAPTER XIII.

Episcopate of Bishop Barnes—Bishop Barnes—Gilpin and John Barnes—Ingratitude of Hugh Broughton—Gilpin and Bishop Barnes—Gilpin preaches before the Bishop—Boldly denounces abuses—Gilpin and Barnes at Houghton Rectory'—Gilpin's triumph—A defence of Bishop Barnes—Gilpin and the Bishop friends—Retributive justice—Barnes and the Dean and Chapter—Evil deeds of the Chapter—Romish proselytising—Selsthorp tries to proselytise Gilpin—Gilpin's letter to Selsthorp—Luther, Tunstall, Chedsey—Communion of saints—Fasting—The Genison episode—Gilpin and Genison—Attacked by W. Wren—Gilpin defends himself—Other unjust slanders—"Let no man trouble me" 231–266

CHAPTER XIV.

The end—Accident in Durham market-place—Death-bed exhortations—Death and burial—Gilpin's will—His executors and supervisors—Gilpin's library—Personal appearance, &c.—Character

PAGE

of Gilpin—A true and God-fearing man—Friend of the young and needy—A typical parish clergyman—His life always at high tide—His popularity and charity—His reverence for the Bible—Literature of his day—His sympathy and humour—His judgment and economy—Decided in his views, yet tolerant—Irving and Wesley valued Gilpin—The lessons of his life . 267–287

APPENDIX 289

I. TESTAMENTUM BERNARDI GILPIN NUPER RECTORIS DE HOUGHTON 289

II. EXTRACTS FROM THE REGISTERS OF KENDAL AND OTHER PARISHES OF MARRIAGES, &C., OF MEMBERS OF THE GILPIN FAMILY 302

INDEX 307

MEMOIRS OF BERNARD GILPIN.

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CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND FAMILY.

BORN in the year 1517, the year in which Luther nailed his celebrated Theses to the doors of Wittemberg Palace Church, and the year after the publication of Erasmus' New Testament, and dying in 1584, Bernard Gilpin lived through one of the most stirring eras of our national and religious history.

He was endowed with a warm and generous heart, and ever had a strong bias towards liberal and enlightened views, and an intense hatred of shams; tyranny, despotism, and cruelty were among the things which his soul abhorred, while he loved to succour the weak and defenceless, and valued truth and righteousness more than houses or lands or the favour of princes. We can imagine then how earnestly and eagerly he watched and entered into all the phases of the great events which were passing in his days.

On both sides of the house he was of gentle blood; his father, a country gentleman of long descent, resided at Kentmere Hall, Westmoreland. A portion of the old Gilpin home still remains. Bernard was one of

a large family; his father had married twice, and the two families numbered eleven. He was never married himself, but family ties were very close among the Gilpins; two of his sisters seem to have married from Houghton—Cecily (Mrs. Maude), and Mary (Mrs. Wharton); probably they had kept his house for him; and he proved himself always most ready to befriend those of his own kith and kin.

Kentmere Hall stands in a quiet valley shut in by lofty fells (a sort of "English Bethlehem," says Grosart), on "a rich, pleasant, breezy tract of pasture land, sloping down from the West to the river Kent, which river, issuing out of a fair mere or lake, gives its name to Kentmere Hall." *

On this fair and pleasant spot, a member of a numerous and honoured family, and in all probability blessed with wise and godly parents, Gilpin's earliest years were spent; the influences which came from all these advantages doubtless contributing each their share in moulding the character of the future Apostle of the North.

The Gilpins retained this property until the middle of the 17th century, having held it since the reign of King John; but in 1655 the then head of the house, being a royalist, joined in an unsuccessful insurrection against Cromwell, became a marked man, and had to go abroad. He left his estate in a kind of trust mortgage to a friend, and does not seem ever to have returned to England; but his heir, coming home in a time of quiet, was not able to get hold of the proper

* Grosart's *Memoir of Richard Gilpin*, p. xviii, prefixed to reprint of the *Demonologia Sacra*.

deeds to recover the estate and it was totally lost to the family.

We have no details of Gilpin's early years: only one anecdote has come down—in this case, however, certainly the child was father to the man. The story is told by Bishop Carlton, his first biographer, his scholar, and his contemporary, and his cousin's son, and we may accept it as authentic. "One Saturday," he tells us, "a certaine begging friar was come to the house of Gilpin's father, as purposing to preach the next morrow, being the Lord's day. The friar at supper time being overcome with drink, became a shameful spectacle to so chast and sober a family. But in the morning he causeth the bell to towle to the sermon, and in the midst thereof he presumed to grow hot against some sinners of the time, and amongst the rest to thunder bouldly against drunkennesse. Young Gilpin, who had but newly got the use of his tongue, sitting neare to his mother's lap in the Church, hearing this, sodainly crieth out these words, 'O mother, doe ye heare how this fellow dare speak against drunkennesse, who was drunk himself yester-night at our house!' The mother made speed to stop the childe's mouth with her hand, that he might speak no further." *

Bernard was a younger son, and as such had to make his own way in the world, and the early indications of piety and godliness which were conspicuous in his conduct marked him out for Holy Orders. "Thoughtful, reserved, serious," from his youth up,

* Carlton's *Life of Bernard Gilpin* in Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Biography*, iv. p. 86.

when only two vocations seemed open to choose between, the Church and the camp, there could be no hesitation as to the decision.

Having distinguished himself at school, he was removed from school to college at what we should think the early age of sixteen. This brings us down to the year 1533.

Queen's College, Oxford, has the honour of being Gilpin's college. Studious and painstaking, earnest and God-fearing, we may be sure that Gilpin's head and heart were accessible to and deeply influenced by the studies and life of the Oxford of that day, and by the great events which were being enacted.

But in order to understand the life of Oxford in Gilpin's undergraduate days, we must go back a little and say a few words about the Renaissance and the "New Learning."

The capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 drove the Greek scholars of that ancient seat of learning into Italy, and especially to Florence. Thither they brought their devotion to classical literature, and thus gave a new direction to study in Italy, and through this the old scholastic learning, so called, was gradually abandoned for the classics. Combined with this movement, and under the teaching of Savonarola, a great religious revival was initiated. From Florence this awakening spread in many directions, there being constant and complete communication between the different Universities in those days.

Thus it had reached England, first by the agency of Grocyn and Linacre, but subsequently and chiefly through John Colet, Erasmus, and Sir Thomas More.

This was at the end of the fifteenth and early in the sixteenth century. It is this which is called the Renaissance or the "New Learning," and it was partly an intellectual and partly a religious movement, more or less one or the other according to the persons by whom it was advocated or to whom it was taught. In England it took a more moral and religious tone than it did, for instance, in Italy.

Although Oxford had been the scene of the early successes of the New Learning, it had in more recent times found a home rather at Cambridge. Of the two Universities Oxford was for many years before Gilpin's arrival and in his time the least advanced.

But even at Oxford in 1533 there was much stir and movement, intellectual and religious; the old educational system was a thing of the past, and a knowledge of Greek literature was being generally imparted. The writings of Erasmus, Colet, and More, pregnant as they were with the inspirations of a better future, were much studied; and the establishment of *Corpus Christi* College, in 1516, by Fox, Bishop of Winchester, and of Cardinal College, or Christ Church, fourteen or fifteen years after, had produced great results in the direction of the New Learning. A writer, some years before the date at which Gilpin went to Oxford, describes the students as "Rushing to Greek letters, they endure fasting, watching, toil, and hunger in the pursuit of them." *

Erasmus' Greek and Latin Testament, we may be sure, had been as keenly and eagerly studied at Oxford as at Cambridge, and the Cambridge scholars and

* Green's *Short History of the English People*, p. 306.

others gathered from all Europe who formed the staff at Christ Church, had not even in Gilpin's time, lost their enthusiasm for the newly disinterred Greek and Latin literature, and were thoroughly alive to the follies of the old system, and to the inconsistencies and abuses of Popes and Bishops, and Priests and Monks. The *Moriæ Encomium* of Erasmus, which turned the ridicule of the world upon the scholastic theologians, exposed the iniquities of the Popes, and described the Monks as shut out of the Kingdom of Heaven in spite of their cowls and habits while waggoners and husbandmen were admitted, was well read and well known at Oxford; "it had been Erasmus' song of triumph, on the accession of Henry VIII., over the old world of ignorance and folly which he and others were hoping was to vanish before the light and knowledge of the new reign."

Years before Gilpin went to Oxford, a group of "Brethren" had been formed at Christ Church for the study of the Epistles, which had included most of the more intelligent and learned scholars of the University. Clerk, the centre of this group, was latterly in the habit of warning those who would join the society of the dangers to be incurred by doing so, and of the Cross to be borne, sometimes even dissuading them from the step. "I fell down on my knees at his feet," says one of them, Anthony Dalabar, "and with tears and sighs besought him that for the tender mercy of God he should not refuse me, saying that I trusted verily that He who had begun this in me would not forsake me, but would give me grace to continue to the end. When he heard me

say so he came to me, took me in his arms and kissed me, saying, 'The Lord God Almighty grant you so to do, and from henceforth ever take me for your father, and I will take you for my son in Christ.'"

It is true that, subsequently, the "Brethren" were thrown into prison, and thus a great check was placed on this movement, and a reaction had set in; but the leaven of Scriptural truth and of enlarged and enlightened views was working in Oxford, and no doubt was exercising a profound influence when Gilpin, a mere boy, but one whose whole nature yearned after God and His truth, found himself thrown into the midst of the stirring life of the University.

But there was also the world outside Oxford, the Politico-Ecclesiastical world, which was full of movement, and in which, just before Gilpin went to college, and for many years during his residence there, events of extraordinary importance were taking place.

Wolsey had fallen and his place had been taken by Thomas Cromwell, under whose guidance, King and Parliament and Convocation were taking steps and adopting measures, which have proved turning-points in the Religious and Political History of England.

The Parliament which assembled in 1529 was not dissolved until 1536, and during those seven years England broke away from the Papal jurisdiction, and established her independence of all foreign control. The Clergy were released from subjection to Rome, the King was declared "Supreme head of the Church and Clergy of England," and appeals to Rome were forbidden.

This is not the place to inquire into the motives of

all the agents in these great changes, it is "through the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day;" suffice it to say that the results were attained, and attained in a constitutional manner. At the same time, Sir Thomas More, who had hailed the assembling of this Parliament with enthusiasm, soon found himself obliged to withdraw from the Government; good man that he was, he could not brook this absolute renunciation of the supremacy of Rome; he had taught himself that this was an article of faith, and he laid his head on the block rather than deny it.

Many much-needed reforms in regard to the Clergy were also enacted by this same Parliament, and after its dissolution in 1536, certain articles of religion were put forth, which went a long way in the direction that moderate Reformers desired, while extremes were carefully avoided. The Bible and the three Creeds were laid down as the Rule of Faith; the sacraments were reduced from seven to three, penance being the third; the doctrine of justification by faith was taught, and many of the dogmas of Rome, such as purgatory, pardons, masses for the dead, &c., were condemned; a version of the Bible also was promised, a promise which was fulfilled in the following year, 1537, by the publication of Coverdale's Bible, really a revision of Tyndale's New Testament with the Old Testament added to it. This Bible was ordered to be placed in every Church, and the Clergy were instructed to exhort all men to read it.

But all this came to the disciples of the New Learning in methods which to them seemed revolutionary, and its acceptance involved a denial of the Papal

supremacy and a breach in Church unity; we need not, therefore, wonder if parallel to this State Reform there should have been a reaction in favour of the old order of things. In fact, from abroad reports were coming in constantly of the wild excesses of the Reformers, and something of the same sort was happening at home, while royal divorces and marriages were proceeding *pari passu* with these breaches with Rome and this breaking up of the old order of things, and so even wise, earnest men who longed for better days were confounded, and were tempted to cling somewhat vigorously to the old system as drowning men catch at straws.

Prior to, and subsequently to the downfall of Cromwell, for his turn came at last, the Government and the Nation seemed to sway from side to side, and the sun of Henry VIII.'s reign, which rose so brightly and seemed so full of promise, sank in confusion and gloom.

I think that I am entitled to assume that Gilpin from the first sympathised with the New Learning; his natural disposition tended in that direction, and various facts connected with this part of his life are hardly capable of explanation except on such an assumption,—facts which I shall have occasion to mention as we proceed, such as his study of the Bible, his application to the writings of Erasmus, his election to the staff of Christ Church, &c.

These events, then, which were taking place must have been of absorbing interest to Gilpin; some of his dreams as an advocate of the New Learning were being realised—in the check given to Clerical neglect,

—in the dissolution of the Monasteries, too many of which were sinks of corruption, &c.; but to a man who never could persuade himself until a much later period of his life that it was right to reject the authority of Rome, and then only when he had arrived at very strong and emphatic views of the subject, there was an element in all this legislation which we may assume was simply revolting; he had no desire for separation from the Pope; his policy was that of the New Learning, namely, reform from within the Church, and, perhaps, wider terms of communion.

Sir Thomas More was executed in 1535—when Gilpin was a student. It was a great blow to the hopes of those who had regarded his position in the Government as a guarantee of sound and moderate reforms on the old lines, when More silently withdrew from his post, Cromwell following him with a tendered oath which he would rather die than take. His was the most charming and attractive figure among the earlier Reformers. Erasmus describes him as "a soul purer than snow." He was the foremost Englishman of his time, the leading spirit of the New Learning, and in his *Utopia* had enunciated principles of justice, mercy, and sound administration, some of which even in the present day we have yet to learn.

When he took office it was with the open stipulation, "First to look to God, and after God to the king," a stipulation which perhaps a little surprised Henry; but which probably to More's mind, as we may infer from the *Utopia*, was even more acceptable to royal ears than he might have made his political creed; he held strongly that the aim of Government should be

"To secure the welfare, social, industrial, intellectual, and religious, of the community at large, and of the labour-class as the true basis of a well-ordered commonwealth," and therefore that after God the next to look to was not the king but the people.

Gentle as More was, he could write almost fiercely when contending with Luther, and latterly in his dread of extreme opinions could even become a persecutor; but the prayers of dying martyrs at Smithfield, "May the Lord forgive Sir Thomas More and open his eyes," had probably sunk deep into his heart, for in his last days he warned his friends if they had to punish others, "not to let their zeal outrun their charity."

"I have given you kisses enough," he wrote to his children when far from home on political business, "but stripes hardly ever." No more beautiful home than More's, at Chelsea, has been described to us. Erasmus speaking of it, says, "It might be called a school and an exercise of the Christian religion. All its inhabitants, male and female, applied their leisure to liberal studies and profitable reading, although piety was their first care; no wrangling, no angry word was heard in it; no one was idle; every one did his duty with alacrity, and not without a temperate cheerfulness."*

But More's head must fall, and as it fell many good men felt as if all hope was gone with him.

Thus, then, when Gilpin was just emerging into manhood, the axe was busy with England's greatest son, and the constitutional authorities of the kingdom,

* Mackintosh's *Life of Sir T. More*, p. 15.

pressed thereto by a strong-willed king and a minister who carried about in his pocket Macchiavelli's *Prince,* were emancipating England from Rome.

Meanwhile, a diligent and conscientious student, Gilpin was achieving for himself a distinguished place at Oxford, and pondering and storing up these events in his mind, while he gratified his burning desire to perfect himself in Greek and Hebrew with a view to Bible study.*

Early in his Oxford career he became a diligent student of Erasmus' writings. That he should study Erasmus was in itself an evidence of a mind open to new impressions and inclined to take an independent course; and as he read Erasmus with interest and appreciation he could hardly feel otherwise than attracted by his grand idea, the idea with which he had published his New Testament in 1516, namely, to place before men the living picture of Christ and His Apostles, and to draw them from the teachings of theologians to those of the founders of Christianity. The value of the Gospels in Erasmus' eyes lay in the vividness with which they brought home to their readers the personal impressions of Christ Himself. "If the footprints of Christ," he writes, "are shown us in any place, we kneel down and adore them; why do we not rather venerate the living and breathing picture of Him in these books?"

* His tutor was a certain Mr. Neal, Fellow of New College, who subsequently was Professor of Hebrew. Gilpin met with Neal when he was abroad, at Paris, and they had long discussions on many of the points of difference between the Reformers and Rome, Neal's views being very decided for the old system, whilst Gilpin's were altering in the opposite direction.

He saw in the diffusion of the teaching of Christ the foundation of a reformed Christianity before which all the superstitions of the mediæval worship would fade away as the darkness before the light; and it was thus that Erasmus desired to see errors and abuses improved off the face of the earth.

These were ideas and principles which Gilpin could not fail to endorse. In his description of the change of his views written to his brother, and which later on I shall have to quote in full, he says, "My nature hath evermore fled controversy so much as I could; my delight and desire hath been to preach Christ, and our salvation by Him, in simplicity and truth, and to comfort myself with the sweet promises of the Gospel, and in prayer."

Erasmus longed "to see the day when even the weakest woman should read the Gospels and the Epistles of Paul; he wished that they should be translated into all languages, and that they might be read and understood not only by Scots and Irish but also by Turks and Saracens; he desired that the time might come when the husbandman should sing portions of the Gospels and Epistles to himself as he followed the plough, when the weaver should hum them to the time of his shuttle, and when the traveller should wile away with their stories the weariness of his journey." We imagine what echoes such aspirations as these would awaken in the pious heart of Gilpin.

But Erasmus would appeal to other impulses in Gilpin's mind, when he advocated the defence of the weak against the strong;—when he protested against the ignorance and incompetence of schoolmasters being

visited upon their pupils in scoldings and floggings on the strange theory that it was one of a master's duties to subdue the spirits of his pupils;—when he denounced the warlike tendencies of princes and their ambitions, and put in a good word for the people who build the cities which princes destroy;—when he protested against the idea that the eagle of all birds should be considered a fitting type of royalty, "a bird neither beautiful nor musical, nor good for food, but murderous, greedy, hateful to all, and with its great powers of doing harm only surpassed by its desire to do it;" —probably also when he declared against the multiplications of dogmas: "Never," said Erasmus, "was the Christian faith more pure and undefiled than when the world was contented with a single creed and that the shortest." *

Food such as this exactly suited the youthful appetite of Gilpin, sitting at the feet of Erasmus and doubtless of More also, for Erasmus could not fail to lead him to More. He was receiving impressions and appropriating generous and noble principles which his after-life shows he never lost.

But his special study was the Bible, in both the original languages: herein was the chief *fons et origo* of his principles. Thus, with the ordinary studies of Oxford, and these others which were not so common, there was being formed in him a noble manhood.

As time went on he attracted more and more atten-

* "It appeared enough to me," writes Gilpin in his letter to his brother, already quoted, "and sufficient for the doctrines of the Church, that all men were satisfied in the Scriptures and the Articles of the Faith: in other things as they are agreeable to Scripture."

tion as one of the rising men of the University, while those who knew him personally could not but admire and love the remarkable sweetness of his disposition, and the unaffected simplicity of his manner.

Having taken his degree, he was soon after elected a Fellow of his college, and as such necessarily attracted fame to Queen's, and took his place among the most promising men of his day.

In founding Cardinal College, Oxford, now Christ Church, Wolsey had contemplated the promotion of the New Learning of which he was a warm advocate, and had invited the most eminent scholars of Europe to share in its teachings. Among persons who had been asked to accept appointments in the new college, but who declined the honour, were Archbishops Cranmer and Parker.

The spirit that animated Wolsey doubtless survived in the heads of the college who succeeded to his authority; and it was not only because Gilpin was rapidly coming to the front as one of the rising men of the University, but also, no doubt, because he was known to be a man of liberal and enlightened views, that he was requested to leave his own college and to join Wolsey's institution; he could not but prove a tower of strength to Cardinal's; his learning and his personal character and reputation marked him out as a most valuable acquisition, and so overtures were made to him which resulted in Gilpin becoming a member of Cardinal College. Both sides would gain by this removal, the college in securing an honest and earnest teacher in fullest sympathy with their special policy, Gilpin in finding him-

self amongst kindred spirits and in having a wider field for exercising his influence and promoting his views.*

Beyond what has already been stated little or nothing is known about Gilpin's career from the date of his entry at Oxford until the early part of the reign of Edward VI., that is for a period of about twelve years; evidently, however, they were not idle years, and it is clear that Oxford knew and valued him.

Luther's name was during all this period in everybody's mouth, but it does not appear that Gilpin had any special sympathy with the German Reformer; like Erasmus and More, he would regard him as a dangerous man, and his Augustinian views as sure to lead to all sorts of abuses and calamities; neither does he seem to have paid any special attention to Luther's writings—indeed, years after, he declared that he had not read them.

As I have inferred, Gilpin belonged to another school altogether. With his Erasmian hopes of reform from within, and sympathising with the men of the New Learning who looked for improvement and for emancipation from the old bad times, to the spread of education, the growth of letters, and the development of human virtue, while their principles taught them to discountenance schism and division, we cannot doubt but that the policy of Luther, to say nothing of his doctrine, must have seemed to him very objectionable and highly perilous.

* Gilpin's name appears in the Christ Church books on January 14, 1547, and on June 22, 1548. In the list of March 12, 1550, his name is not found; he had left between the last two dates.

Gilpin, like Colet, Erasmus, More, and their party, had hitherto directed his attention mainly to the moral evils and abuses rather than to the general doctrinal and ecclesiastical system of Rome, and was not at all for Luther's "root-and-branch" policy; we should however greatly err if we adopted Fuller's opinion that "he hated vice rather than error;" his subsequent history proves him to have been most careful and conscientious on questions of doctrine, and indeed his lack of sympathy with Luther at this date was owing greatly to the tenacity with which he clung to the doctrine of the Papal supremacy and to his dread of extravagant excesses. At a subsequent period there is evidence that he was quite prepared to recognise the valuable work which Luther contributed to the Reformation.

The passing of "The Act of the Six Articles," in 1539, "the whip with the six strings" as it was called, was a measure by which Henry and his advisers hoped that what seemed like a headlong career into chaos might be stayed. Possibly Gilpin shared in the fears which prompted that reactionary measure, but he could hardly approve of its terrible penalties, though the excesses into which many of the Reformers were drifting might well seem to him, from his point of view, an excuse for some sort of repressive action.

It was not so many years since the daring and uncompromising attitude of Luther and the extreme position which he was assuming had alarmed Erasmus, who foresaw Revolution instead of Reform as the outcome. "I see no end of it," he wrote, "but the

turning upside down of the whole world;" and the same tendency was observable by moderate Reformers in England during the latter years of Henry VIII.'s reign.

During that period the hopes of the friends of the New Learning must have been at their lowest ebb, and we need not wonder if many were driven back into a rigid Romanism, though no doubt at the same time some drifted in the direction of Protestantism, and if only a few were able to keep a steady head in such stormy weather.

As regards Gilpin, the effect of what was passing around him was probably to make him less and less prepared to support the reforms already introduced, and more inclined to prop up the old Faith, much the same effect as was produced on More and Erasmus at an earlier date. It might seem to him that the only chance of retaining anything was in the maintenance of the supremacy of Rome.

Our point of view is one thing, Gilpin's was another, —he started from the axiom that the Papal supremacy was a Divine institution, and in the excesses and wild theories of the Reformers he could see only the natural consequence of throwing off the proper authority; consequently, although he wished devoutly for changes of a very radical nature in the Church, and although there was much which had been propounded and done which he could not but approve of, yet the price seemed far too high, and the loss more than enough to balance the gain.

When Henry VIII. showed Sir Thomas More his book in answer to Luther, in 1521—the book which

earned for him the title of "Defender of the Faith"—More ventured to remark on the passages advocating the Divine authority of the Pope as being rather too strong; he had in fact already conceived some doubts on the question, which were not obscurely hinted at in his *Utopia:* "Whereunto," More says, "his Highness answered me that he would in no wise minish anything of that matter; of which thing his Highness showed me a secret cause whereof I never had anything heard before." More, advocate of the New Learning as he was, studied the question again, with the result that he came to the conclusion that the Papacy was of Divine authority, and ultimately, as we have seen, he laid down his life in defence of this theory.

Thus then More, beginning with doubting the Papal supremacy, was led by further study, and something which Henry VIII. had told him, into an undoubting acceptance of the theory. Gilpin on the other hand began with a full acquiescence in the Primacy of the Pope, and ended, as the result of study and observation and thought, in totally rejecting the same.

During the greater part of the reign of Henry, however, Gilpin would undoubtedly have been as ready to sacrifice his life for the supremacy as More was.

This breach with Rome was in Gilpin's eyes a dreadful thing. Why not reform from within? Why not wait for a General Council? Why pull the whole fabric down, when all that was needed was some repairs here and there? And when he saw the extremes into which men were rushing—the foundations of Faith and morality questioned,—the fanatic raving

through the land,—profanity and vice abounding,* when he saw ecclesiastical order almost at an end, and abuses on all hands prevailing, we may be sure that it would be these features of the times which would most attract his attention, and that he would be consumed by fears lest all precious things should perish.

Gilpin must be driven more and more into the ranks of the uncompromising defenders of the Roman Church unless something shall occur which may give him pause, and compel him to look into the foundations of an untenable position.

Up among the fells of Westmoreland and at his mother's knee, Gilpin had learnt his faith; it was part of his nature. It would be a terrible thing to a conscientious mind to abandon one jot or tittle of this creed. The influence of the Oxford society in which he lived had by this time, the latter years of Henry's reign, become strongly reactionary, and he could not shut his eyes to what was going on at home and abroad. How could he then become a party to the overthrow of the Papal supremacy on which all seemed to depend?

He was all through honestly waiting on God, and searching His word, and framing his life upon its precepts; and God was leading him by a path which he knew not into more scriptural views and fuller Gospel liberty.

Erasmus' New Testament was doing its work all the time in his heart as in those of thousands of others;

* "London was never so full of ill," says Latimer. "O London, London," he cries, "repent, for I think God more displeased with London than He ever was with the city of Nebo."—Blunt's *History of the Reformation*, p. 156.

never was any book received with such enthusiasm as this had been fifteen or twenty years before; never had any book been so furiously assailed subsequently, but it held its own. Erasmus was a true prophet when he wrote, "A spiritual temple must be raised in desolate Christendom; the mighty of this world will contribute towards it their marble, their ivory, and their gold; I who am poor and humble offer the foundation-stone:" and he laid down on God's altar his Greek and Latin New Testament.

CHAPTER II.

HOPES FROM A GENERAL COUNCIL.

THE commencement of the reign of Edward VI. was a very critical time for those whose utmost desire was to see a reform of the abuses of the Church, and who expected in that way, and by means of education and enlightenment, that all that was needful would be achieved. Gilpin shared these views to a greater or lesser extent, and must have observed with alarm the rapidity with which innovations were being introduced, and the completeness of the independence of Rome which was being accomplished.

It was natural, as already observed, that what was passing in Church and State should make the disciples of the New Learning draw towards the Romish party, and endeavour to build up to some extent the breaches between the favourers of things as they once were and themselves.

Gilpin, in all probability, like many others, had never seen anything very objectionable in most of the doctrines of Rome; it was more what might seem easy to clear away than what was of the essence of the system that he and they wished to see reformed. Moreover, great hopes had been conceived from a General Council, and now one was assembled at Trent which might be expected to accomplish all needful

changes. But this wholesale sweeping away of accepted doctrines, this introduction of so much that was novel, in sympathy with the schemes of the foreign Reformers, and especially the assertion of the Royal Supremacy, was just the occasion to settle the wavering allegiance to Rome of multitudes of the more learned, thoughtful, and cautious, and to compel them by all they held dear to rally round her standard.

The Universities, and especially Oxford, would necessarily be the focus of much of this tendency, and being also the sources from whence the religious teachers of the nation were derived, it was to be expected that Edward and his advisers would adopt some special measures for influencing opinion at these important centres of what might prove either treason or loyalty to the new policy.

Circumstances such as these prompted the appointment of Peter Martyr, one of the leading Italian Reformers, to the chair of Divinity of Oxford. He was a man of mild and amiable disposition, and his learning and piety soon attracted attention to his lectures. No one could have been appointed who was more likely to obtain a courteous hearing and to persuade his hearers.

In the course of his Lectures on 1st Corinthians, however, he attacked the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation. This was looked upon as a declaration of war; the friends of Rome were of course up in arms at once;—"something must be done; if this were permitted there was an end of religion, nothing but confusion must ensue to the Church."

The opposition threatened to be dangerous to Peter

Martyr, but fortunately for him the Act of the Six Articles was no longer in force, and power had passed from the hands of the advocates of the old doctrines.

I need not enter into all the details of the action taken by his opponents; suffice it to say that nothing would satisfy the Romish party but that there should be a public disputation with Peter Martyr, and in selecting advocates for their side they were resolved that Gilpin should be one of them.

We may be surprised at the choice of Gilpin for this office; he was not fond of arguing and controversy. He says in his letter to his brother, already quoted, "I have ever been given to eschew, so far as I might, controversies and disputations." But probably his great reputation for godliness, and the high personal esteem in which he was held in the University, had something to do with the choice, as well as his known learning. Moreover, he had already been engaged in a public disputation with John Hooper, afterwards Bishop of Gloucester, and one of the Marian Martyrs, and was supposed by his own side to have vanquished his opponent. Perhaps Gilpin's own account of that encounter would not have been quite so triumphant: its effect upon his own mind had been to make him feel not quite so sure as he had been in regard to several of the doctrines of Rome. This, united to his natural disinclination to enter the lists, made him shrink very much from the proposed encounter with Peter Martyr. He would have much preferred to stand on one side and watch the discussion; it was altogether against his wish to take one of the foremost places in it.

But great pressure was brought to bear upon him, and at last he consented; and thus, himself a man to whose mind doubts were no stranger, he is placed among the foremost combatants to meet and confound a redoubtable adversary like Peter Martyr, a skilled disputant, and one fully convinced in his own mind.

Gilpin's colleagues in the debate were Doctors Tresham, Chedsey, and Morgan, and upon them the actual debating seems mainly to have depended. Gilpin listened rather than debated, was learning rather than defending his cause. Foxe in his account of this disputation does not mention Gilpin's name at all.

The discussion lasted for four days, and the honours belong to Peter Martyr. He published his arguments, and they may be read in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*. In a letter addressed to Henry Bullinger, who had congratulated him on "the happy result" of this discussion, Martyr says, "Although there are many adversaries, I have on the other hand many supporters, and such, if I am not mistaken, as I have no reason to be ashamed of."* Whether in those supporters he was reckoning Gilpin we do not know, but it is certain that Gilpin found Martyr's arguments too much for him, and acknowledged honestly that such was the case; not that he felt compelled to change his views all at once, but he was being more and more shaken, and was convinced that if the accepted doctrines were true they must be proved in other ways than those usually adopted, and he resolved to enter

* *Original Letters relative to the English Reformation*, ii. p. 478.

into no more controversies until he was better informed than at present.

This disputation took place at the end of May 1549, and Cox, Dean of Christ Church and Vice-Chancellor, subsequently Bishop of Ely, was moderator.*

In Gilpin's mind truth was the one object of search, to be sought for diligently, honestly, and in an unselfish and God-fearing spirit; his own reputation as a disputant was not the issue to be regarded, but the establishment of the true and the overthrow of the false.

Peter Martyr could not but contrast the bearing and spirit of Gilpin with those of his colleagues, Chedsey, Morgan, and Tresham, and "was often wont to say that he was not much troubled for Chedsey, Morgan, or the like; but as for that Gilpin," said he, "I am very much moved concerning him, for he doeth and speaketh all things with an upright heart. The rest seem to me to be men who regard their bellies most of all, and being most unconstant are carried away as it were with every blast of ambition and covetousnesse. But Gilpin resteth firmly upon gravity of manner, and the testimony of a most laudable life seemeth to honour with his goodnesse the cause which he undertaketh. Yea, and he did often pray unto God that He would be pleased at the last to convert unto His truth the heart of Gilpin, being so inclinable to all honest desires." †

* See Carwithen's *History of the Church of England*, i. p. 302, and Strype's *Eccles. Memorials*, i. p. 338.

† Carlton's *Life of Gilpin* in Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Biography*, iv. p. 89.

If Gilpin made great researches in preparation for this dispute, as he undoubtedly did, it was followed by still greater.

That the cause had failed as argued in this discussion did not necessarily mean that it was absolutely untenable, and his investigations in the first instance were with a view to restore the waste places, and to re-establish on a firmer basis the doctrines which seemed tottering to their fall.

The weight of antiquity was an important fact; the convictions of the learned, and the religion of the people harmonising with and built upon those same convictions, could not be lightly set aside; what was his private judgment against the consensus of many generations of most of the learned, and of nearly all Europe! Gilpin, as Carlton describes him, was not a man to "pursue his measures impetuously, but with calmness and circumspection," and above all with humility.

But the more he investigated, the more he doubted; Scripture was his standard—on that point he never had any hesitation—and tried by this standard, many of the doctrines he had been accustomed to hold appeared to lack anything like a sure foundation.

He seems also to have inquired into the *history* of Papal dogmas, and this inquiry convinced him that the appearance of antiquity which they wore was deceptive, and that the real antiquity which alone deserves the title, namely that of the apostolic and earliest and purest ages of the Church, they could not by any means claim.

Look where he might, the solid rock was dissolving

under his feet, and the doctrine in which he had been brought up was slowly but surely losing its hold upon him.

We are not to suppose that these inquiries were conducted only for a short time; they apparently extended over several years, and very slow indeed was the process by which Gilpin was led to renounce the various errors of the Romish system; he spoke to friends on the subject from time to time; every scrap of information which reached him that had any bearing on the question was weighed and studied; he travelled on the continent for years, residing at different Universities, as we shall see; and no doubt the whole matter was constantly in his prayers; never was there a more faithful and diligent inquirer after the truth.

The nature of the Presence in the Eucharist was one of his great difficulties, and he had discovered many other errors both of doctrine and practice ere he had attained any certainty on this point. But the chief crux was the question of the supremacy of the Pope: to renounce this was to a conscientious mind like his something analogous to the renunciation of his clerical vows, or to the forsaking of father or mother.

We must not judge his difficulties by the ideas which prevailed afterwards when the great breach had been long made, and the Church of England stood free and unfettered, all men accepting the position as the true liberty of God. He and many another true man clung for years and years to the hope that all necessary reforms were possible without breaking, as it

seemed to them, the unity of the Church; and it must not be forgotten, as showing how unfixed opinion was as to the necessity of an absolute breach, that the Pope was prepared to endorse the Prayer Book of 1559* if Elizabeth would have recognised his authority, and that it was quite a common thing for Roman Catholics to attend the Church of England Services for years after Queen Elizabeth's accession to the throne.

We look back upon the Reformation when its whole course has been followed out to the end, but those who lived in the midst of its agitations and changes could not tell what turn events might take from time to time; especially as these events depended not on the will of the people but on the views of the individual who might occupy the throne.

Moreover the rigid stereotyping of doctrine in the Romish Church which dates from the Council of Trent was then hardly known, and changes in Rome did not seem the impossible thing they may seem now.

"The Fathers of the Councell," Gilpin once remarked in conversation with Thomas Lever, "have done the Church a very shrewd turne: for that which was indifferent before times they leave not so now. I remember that Bishop Tonstall often tolde me that Pope Innocent the Third had done very unadvisedly, in that he had made the opinion of Transubstantiation an article of faith: seeing in former times it was free to holde or refuse that opinion. Moreover the Bishop tolde me that he did not doubt but that himselfe, if he had beene in that Councell, could have pre-

* See Blunt's *Annotated Prayer Book*, p. 34.

vailed with the Pope to have let that businesse alone. And what he judged concerning Transubstantiation, the same may a man resolve touching all Popery after the publication of the Councell of Trent; for that which was indifferent before, now they doe not suffer so to be. Therefore I suppose that the times of our forefathers, though oppressed with much ignorance, were happier farre then the ensuing ages can be under the Papists: because they have now altered in the Councell of Trent many institutions of the auncient Church. For whereas they have placed a part of the rule of faith in traditions, that is a thing which was never done in the Church before. Many things which were permitted to be taught in the Church formerly touching Justification and the Sacraments are not now tolerated. And upon these occasions the Fathers of the Councell of Trent have laid upon other churches a necessity of making a separation from the Church of Rome: wherein me thinks that they have not dealt advisedly: For the Church is thereby distracted into differences and factions, and whatsoever was formerly indifferent in doubtful points, the Fathers of Trent have made it all necessary, and tooke upon them a very hard taske."

Considerations such as these will perhaps help us to form a fairer judgment of the conduct of men like Gilpin, placed in such difficult and perplexing positions and seeing no distance ahead.

'He had, however, two very safe guides to which he trusted himself in investigations which might many a time have led him to conclusions that would have cost him his life, namely his reverential study of scripture as the one standard of truth, and his honest purity of purpose.

And so as time went on, and doctrine after doctrine

was seen to be untenable, and he received more light, the question of allegiance to Rome came more to the front, and more imperiously demanded a solution. Oh how hard it was to decide! how perilous in this case would a false step be—perilous to his peace of mind and to his soul! The decision came at last from Rome's own policy; the decree of the Council of Trent which placed tradition on a level with scripture was the last ounce which broke the camel's back. "Tradition," as he used to say, "is in no degree comparable with the word of an honest man," and to place this in any sense on a level with scripture was something so outrageous, so shocking, so blasphemous, that the supremacy of the Pope began to lose its last hold upon his mind. He argued, "When Antichrist shall come, is it possible for him to use Christ and the scriptures more blasphemously than the Pope hath done? But is it possible that the Pope should be Antichrist?" Here he stopped, like a man hesitating before leaping a precipice. There must be more study, more prayer, more meditation; until at last he had persuaded himself that it was even so, that Rome was Antichrist, and that therefore "there was a necessity to come out of her, and that that Apostaticall Church was to be forsaken."

Long, however, was Gilpin in the debatable land. He had given up much Roman teaching ere he could give up Rome. Probably this uncertainty lasted through the reign of Queen Mary, and was the reason of his being able to accept livings in her reign as well as in that of Edward VI. We shall not err if we assume that eight or nine years were spent by Gilpin in investiga-

tions and inquiries on the questions which separated the Reformed Church of England from the Church of Rome, and that the supremacy was nearly if not quite the last link that was broken.

We may not all agree with the view which Gilpin took on this question, but we must admire his undaunted perseverance and patience in the inquiries, and must not permit ourselves to doubt his honesty.

One valuable result of such careful and long-continued research was that Gilpin became a very sound divine, and held his opinions clearly and tenaciously, so that it was impossible again to move him, either in the direction of Popery or in that of Puritanism, as we shall see in subsequent chapters. He was grounded and settled in the truth; he had won it after hard fights and long-continued struggles, and every iota of his creed represented to him so much of hard work and so much of painful sacrifices of old convictions.

But, as already remarked, his change of views proceeded very slowly, because of his thoroughness and honesty—because of his veneration for authority and constitutional aversion to changes—because of the earnestness with which he had embraced and had consequently been held by Romish doctrine. But with his sound views of scriptural authority and his God-fearing investigation of truth, the ultimate result could not be uncertain.

In 1575, after all the travail and pain were past, Gilpin wrote a long letter to his brother George, in which he gave very full details of the gradual change of his views, and of the methods and means by which he came round to the light. The letter was written

because the Lords Bedford and Leicester had requested from his brother information on the subject. It is as follows:—

"You doe request (brother) that I should relate unto you somewhat at large the manner and meanes of my conversion from superstition to the light of the Gospell: a thing, which I suppose, is not unknowne unto you to have beene a worke of many yeares: neverthelesse as time and health shall give leave I will conceale nothing from you herein. I will confesse mine owne shame to the confusion of the Divell: I will say with the Apostle, 1 Tim. i. 13, *I was received to mercy, for I did it ignorantly.*

"In the dayes of King Edward I was drawne to dispute against certaine positions of Peter Martirs: howbeit out of a naturall inclination I have alwayes so farre as I could avoided controversies and disputations. And when I was but a younge divine, and had found out by holding that disputation that the foundation whereto I trusted was not so solid as I firmly supposed it, I thereupon began somewhat seriously to read over the Scriptures and writings of the Fathers, that I might confirme my selfe in my received opinions. But God freed my minde from that prejudicate conceit by little and little, and the zeale which I had for Popish religion began to coole in me every day more and more. But on the other side I felt certaine sparkling desires which urged me to search out the truth. In the meane while I repaired to the Bishop of Durham, that I might be further instructed; who tolde me, that in the matter of transubstantiation, Innocentius the Pope the third of that name had done unadvisedly, seeing he had made it an article of faith. And he did further confesse that the Pope had committed a great fault in that touching indulgences and other things he had taken no better order for the quiet of the Church. Afterwards I conferred with Doctor Redman, in whom I reposed much hope in regard of his

eminent vertues, and great schollership. He affirmed unto me that the booke of Common Prayer, was a holy booke, and agreeable to the Gospell. These things cast me into many distractive thoughts. After this one of the fellowes of Queenes Colledge in Oxford told me that he had heard Doctor Chedsey saying among his friends, that it must come to this point, that the Protestants must grant us a reall presence of Christ in the Sacrament, and we likewise give way unto them in the opinion of transubstantiation, and so we shall accord. Doctor Weston made a long oration touching the Supper of the Lord to bee administred under both kindes. Mr. Morgan tolde me that Doctor Ware a man most famous for life and learning had affirmed unto him that the principall sacrifice of the Church of God was the sacrifice of thanksgiving. This was his answer when I had demanded of him what could be said for the sacrifice of the Masse. The most learned bishops in this kingdome at that time confuted the primacy of the Pope both in words and writing. Mr. Harding being newly returned home out of Italy, in a long and famous oration so plainly set out and painted to the life the Friers and unlearned Bishops, who had met at the Councell of Trent in their greene gownes, that it abated in me and in very many others a great deale of that opinion and confidence which we had reposed in Generall Councels.

"These things and many others gave me occasion diligently to search the Scriptures and the writings of the Fathers: whence I had begun to observe very many and very great abuses, and some enormities oftentimes used, and as oft defended in Popery, and to judge reformation necessary on the other part. Whiles I went on in this manner, I was overruled by the persuasions of some friends to accept of a parsonage; whereunto I was drawne against my will. If I offended God in undertaking the charge before I was more sufficient scholler, and better grounded in

religion, I aske God forgivenesse. Nor doe I doubt but I have obtained mercy in his sight. Before I was entred upon that parsonage I preacht before King Edward at Greenwich a Sermon which had approbation of many good men.

"The Lord Treasurer, being at that time Secretary, obtained for me from the King licence as a generall Preacher throughout the Kingdome so long as the King lived, which time fell out to be not much above the space of halfe a yeare after. In my Sermons I handled those points wherein I was best grounded, and wherein I was undoubtedly resolved out of the Scriptures. I examined the Masse: and the abuse so farre as I was able to observe at that time consisted in the too much reverence, and grosser worship of the people; because I beleeved not Transubstantiation. Neverthelesse at some times I read Masse, but seldome and privately.

"Then was I forthwith sent beyond the Seas that I might oversee the printing of my Lord Bishop Tonstall his booke touching the Eucharist, with two or three books more, as you know, at Antwerp: where I beheld for the space of three yeares at Paris, Antwerp, and Lovaine, and in some other places very grosse Idolatry. This thing did more and more estrange me from the Popish religion: most of all because the learneder Papists did in their disputations in schooles deny the adoration of images, yet allowed the intolerable abuse thereof in their churches. And now whiles with all earnestnesse I advised with the holy Scriptures, and writings of the Fathers, I observed many things which alienated mine heart from the Popish Church. I observed in that Church notable corruptions of the doctrine of the Bible; many things in the Sacraments instituted against Scripture, some Sacraments lately added: In the Sacrament of the Supper the one halfe taken away: the fiction of Transubstantiation brought in: traditions of

the church made equall to the word of God, and to the holy Scriptures, and to be imbraced with the same pious affection: the worship of images brought into the Church: all things performed in the Church before the people in an unknowne language: but above all the rest the question concerning Antichrist troubled me most, because it seemed not to me a safe thing to make a seperation from the Popish Church, except I were first fully resolved that the Pope is Antichrist: and in this point I cannot easily expresse with how many difficulties and distractions I was daily opposed.

"Afterwards I was sent for home againe by the Bishop, who conferred upon me the Rectory of Essingdon: where when I had indeavoured to be constant in preaching, I observed that I had upon a sodaine procured to my selfe many and heavy enemies thereby: for I had preached against plurality of benefices, and non-residency. Mine adversaries cryed out that all such as broached that doctrine would proove hereticks quickly. Others were much displeased with me for that I had preached repentance and salvation by Christ. They laid to my charge that I did not make whole Sermons about transubstantiation, purgatory, holy water, the worshipping of images, the invocation of saints, and the like; which they could never heare come from me. And by how much the people were more earnest to resort to my Sermons, so much the more eagerly they tooke offence at mee and hated mee.

"A very small matter brought me into danger. An honest matron, because in her pangs of childbirth she had often called upon God, was grievously checked by the other good women, because she had not called upon the blessed Virgin. To whom she made answer: 'I have heard' (saith she) 'a certaine famous preacher, one Gilpin, a man that came lately out of France; if he will advise me to call upon the Saints, I will take his counsell in that point.' I tolde them that I durst not persuade any one to invocate

the Saints, but that those who call onely upon God for help in all their dangers, have a commandement from God so to doe, and a firme promise for the infallible comforting of their conscience. This occasion stirred me up many foes.

"In the meane while I often conversed with learned men, my very loving friends and kindred. I demanded how it came to passe that there was no reformation of so many abuses touching images, reliques, pilgrimages, buying and selling of masses and trentalls, with many other errours which in the time of King Edward the Papists had not onely confessed to be superstitious, but had promised reformation of them, and professed that it was meete the Church should be purged of them: which thing they said they would gladly doe, if ever the power came into their hands againe. When I asked of them in which of these points reformation should begin, in expectation of which thing I returned from Paris the more willingly, answer was made unto me, that no way must be given to the ignorant multitude. If (say they) we once confesse any errours at all, they will straightway cry out that many other things also are worthy to be reformed, besides those which we shall yeeld unto them, and so they will be still growing upon us, that we shall never have done reforming. These things wounded me grievously, and drave me to seeke out for peace of conscience.

"After these things, having preached two or three Sermons at Newcastle, I began to explaine my conscience more at large; where there were gathered twelve or thirteene articles against me, and sent to the Bishop. And now had mine adversaries of the clergy whom I had grievously provoked, obtained what they had long looked for. Nor would they give over untill the Bishop had called me before their faces, to examine me in the point of the Sacrament. The Bishop shewed me as much favour, I suppose,

as he durst. In Transubstantiation he would not trouble me; onely he inquired concerning the reall presence, which I granted, and so was freed out of that danger. And as touching the reall presence, I found not my selfe fully resolved. I supposed that therein lay hid a mystery above my capacity. Neverthelesse my conscience did sometimes chide me, for that I had before them yeelded in expresse words to a point which seemed unto me doubtfull. But I hoped that God would pardon mine ignorance, and in time bring me to a greater light of knowledge.

"The winter following Queene Mary departed this life, and then I began to explaine my mind more fully. For before that time (for I must needes confesse the truth) weaknesse, ignorance, and the terrours of mine adversaries had somewhat restrained me. About Easter I was accused to the Bishop upon many articles, both out of the Diocesse of Yorke, and of Durham, all which things neverthelesse hurt me no further then thus, that the Bishop incited thereto by the complaints of mine adversaries struck my name out of his last Will and Testament, forasmuch as the plebeians and ordinary sort of people were extremely offended with me. Now I, in that I lost the Bishops executorship, found my selfe eased of a great burthen, and was glad thereof. But as for the favour of the multitude, I hoped in time through the goodnesse of God to recover it againe, that my preaching might profit the more to edification; for otherwise I never desired the love of the vulgar.

"In harvest came the visitors; and Doctor Sandes sent for me to Aukland, and appointed me both time and place to preach against the primacy at Durham. But he himselfe preaching the day before, whiles he seemed utterly to deny a reall presence, had so wounded my tender conscience, that the night following I could not sleep at all; and I was much troubled in my minde, whether I should preach the next day or not. At the last I went almost out of my bed

into the pulpit, where, I know not how it happened, whether it was through my disquiet of conscience, or want of sleep, or in that I had offended God to goe up against my conscience, but me thought I did never feele such a want of utterance; and yet in my judgement I had provided matter enough, and waighty reasons.

"The next day all the Ministers in the Diocesse were met to subscribe. Now so it was that in a point or two of the articles my conscience did not appeare to me so well resolved, as I could have wished. Therefore I stept a little out of the way, hoping that I might escape from being called. But when my Curate came to the booke, who, I supposed, would never have stood at it, by reason of some discourse I had formerly with him, he withdrew himselfe as unwilling to subscribe; and thereupon I was called for, and the booke held out unto me; when straightwayes I had these thoughts in my selfe: 'My greatest confidence is reposed in this religion, because it giveth glory to God, and authority to the word of God for the rooting out of superstition, and humane doctrines. Onely mine heart doubted in certaine points of smaller consequence, which God (as I hope) shall in time reveale unto me. If I shall refuse, I shall be a meanes to make many others to refuse, and so consequently hinder the course of the word of God.' Therefore I subscribed; and the night following I sent unto Doctor Sandes my protestation touching those two points which had troubled me. He being nothing offended tooke my protestation very courteously: so my Curate subscribed also, and the day following fell sicke. And whiles I was gone along with the visitors to Kendall and Lancaster, he dyed before my returne, having not beene sicke a whole weeke. Some supposed that subscription killed his heart; others said his infirmity proceeded from excessive drinking: God onely knoweth what was the cause of his death.

"In processe of time, me thought I grew more and more strengthened and resolved: but I will confesse the truth, I had many and grievous temptations, which would not let me sleepe for many nights, and drave me betwixt sleeping and waking into such dreames, as I thinke few men ever had the like. My nature did ever desire to avoid controversies. My chiefest comfort and indeavour was to preach Christ, and salvation through Christ plainly and sincerely, and to comfort my selfe in the most sweet promises of holy Scripture, and in pouring out my prayers to God. The insatiable covetousnesse that could be restrained by no bounds of temperance and moderation, together with the pride and carnall liberty, and other vices of the same ranke, which raigned among all sorts and degrees of people, but most of all in us the Priests and Ministers, who ought to be as we are termed, *the Salt of the earth*, have oftentimes broke my sleepes. But recovering I quieted my selfe in God, saying, surely how much more the iniquity of men doth abound, so much the more glorious shall God appeare in purging, sanctifying, and preserving his elect people in the midst of a froward generation.

"I was ever sollicitous and wary either in subscriptions or oathes not to be catched in a trap. It appeared enough to me, and sufficient for the Doctours of the Church, that all men were satisfied in the Scriptures and the Articles of the faith; in other things as they are agreeable to Scripture: because the holy Scripture ought to holde soveraigne place and preheminency above all the writings of all men. I remember when I went to be admitted into orders by the Bishop of Oxford, that the Bishops Chaplaine did administer an oath unto us that we should allow the ordinations already made, or hereafter to be made. Touching which oath when we considered somewhat seriously what it was to oblige our selves to ordinations to come, concerning which we could resolve upon nothing, these things not only

much distracted me but troubled nine or ten more, who were sworne with me, men farre better schollers then my selfe. For my part I resolved to be sworne to no writings but with this exception, so farre onely as they are agreeable to the word of God. Now, how much it distressed my minde that an oath should be exacted in doubtfull cases, I have explained in another discourse for the quiet of my conscience. And this I may boldly say, that since I tooke the course to explaine mine infirmities by writing, not fearing who tooke notice of them, so that it might benefit my selfe or others, I have found exceeding peace and quiet of conscience, and am day by day more edified and confirmed by the reading of Scriptures. And in this case, I praise God, that when I found my selfe most distressed and weake, my faith in the mercies of God was so firme, as I assure my selfe, that if at that very instant I should die, yet I have had and doe retaine that confidence, that these distractions could nothing hinder my salvation. I am resolved with St. Paul, *I have obtained mercy, for I did it ignorantly;* and with Job, *Although the Lord kill me, yet will I trust in him.* Yet I have full many a time asked God mercy for these offences, infirmities, ignorances, and all other things, and will ever doe so whiles I shall live in this world. God be mercifull unto us all."

I have given this admirable and interesting chapter of autobiography here in full, although there are many statements in it which refer to later periods in his life, and which I shall have again to quote. But it should be read as a whole.

It will be observed that some facts relating to the periods in question are omitted and others ignored, facts supplied by Gilpin's later biographer, Prebendary Gilpin, no doubt from documents now lost but which he was able to consult. For instance, Houghton is

not even mentioned, and the reason given by Gilpin the biographer for his foreign travels, namely, to inquire into controverted questions from persons on both sides of the dispute, is ignored. The letter was written many years after most of the events referred to took place.

This letter is a curious picture of a mental and spiritual process which many others besides Gilpin were passing through. Very painful indeed in those days must have been the position, and very difficult the steering for honest men who could not sympathise with the rigid Romanists on the one hand, nor with the advanced and advancing Reformers on the other. But Gilpin saw land at last, and happily arrived "at the haven where he would be."

Always a cautious and prudent man, Gilpin felt deeply all the responsibilities involved all the solemn issues of the question of allegiance. Taught to rely on the Church of Rome, he found it very difficult to rely on his own judgment; and then surrounding circumstances would be a perpetual argument for extra watchfulness. No wonder that years and years elapsed ere he could settle his mind, nor that he betimes thought it was settled when it was not, nor that he was often misunderstood. And which of us can denounce very sternly the policy of reserve which Gilpin sometimes found it desirable to adopt, or be anything but glad when we read of the unshackling of his tongue which followed the accession of Queen Elizabeth? "Before that time," he says in his honest confession above, "weaknesse, ignorance, and the terrours of mine adversaries had somewhat restrained me."

A quotation from Bishop Carlton's remarks on this letter of Gilpin's may fitly close this chapter. "Thou seest, reader, Mr. Gilpin's upright dealing; he speaketh nothing of his owne vertues, but he is wholly taken up with the acknowledgement and enumeration of his weaknesses. Perhaps some criticks will laugh at the simplicity of the man, but I herein admire his apostolick spirit, who, after the example of blessed Paul, dare not boast of himself, but boasteth in his infirmities that Christ may dwell in him." *

* Carlton, p. 134.

CHAPTER III.

APPOINTED TO NORTON.

GILPIN'S preference was for an academic life. If he had been permitted to have his own way he would at least have waited until his own views were thoroughly fixed before accepting any parochial charge, but his friends were very anxious to see him settled in a parish.

He was not, in his own opinion, sufficiently instructed in religion to become a teacher; besides, his conception of the responsibilities of the clerical life was a very high one. He would say that a parish was "an arduous task, especially at that time, and that religion could not suffer more than by the rawness and inexperience of teachers, such as he assumed himself to be."

Thus minded, he continued at Oxford until he was thirty-five years of age, when, through the interest of his friends, the vicarage of Norton, near Stockton, was offered to him. As he tells us, he "was overruled by the persuasion of some friends" to accept the appointment. "If I offended God in taking such a charge," he says in his letter to his brother, "before I was better learned and better resolved in religion, I cry God mercy, and I doubt not but I

have found mercy in His sight." This was in November 1552, the last year but one of the reign of King Edward.

Persons appointed to livings in the Royal patronage at that time were required to preach before the King, that there might be an opportunity of ascertaining their orthodoxy. The utmost care was being taken by Cranmer and the authorities in Church and State to further and promote the cause of the Reformation. Accordingly Gilpin must go to Greenwich, where the King was, to preach in the Royal presence. His sermon is extant, and is an interesting record of the times. It was preached on the first Sunday after Epiphany, 1553, and is in fact the only sermon of Gilpin's that has come down to us. The King himself was absent, much to Gilpin's chagrin and annoyance; he had therefore to address himself to his empty chair, but there were courtiers present on whom the preacher depended for reporting to Edward what he said.

There are many things in this sermon that remind us of the preaching of Colet and Latimer. Many of his topics are precisely those of these two celebrated preachers. He launches out against the crimes and abuses of the age as they might have done, and uses what he doubtless felt was a noble opportunity for the utterance of home truths which much needed utterance.

The pulpit then had to perform something of the offices which now devolve upon Parliament and the press; and what we should call the most unfitting topics were discussed in sermons. For instance, in

Henry VII.'s reign the extortions of Empson and Dudley were denounced at Paul's Cross. Very free treatment also was tolerated: the freedom of the pulpit was then what the freedom of the press is now; in fact, the pulpit in those days when there were no newspapers was almost the only means by which persons in high places could be reached, and wrongs and abuses ventilated. When Henry VIII. was bent on war with France, Dean Colet took occasion in a sermon before the king to inveigh against the contemplated war. After the sermon, the King sent for the Dean. "Let us be alone," said Henry, "put on your cap, Mr. Dean, and we will take a walk. Cheer up," he continued, "you have nothing to fear; you have spoken admirably of Christian charity, and have almost reconciled me to the King of France; yet as the contest is not one of choice but of necessity, I must beg of you in some future sermon to explain this to my people; unless you do so I fear my soldiers may misunderstand your meaning." Colet did what he was told. The art of tuning pulpits was not unknown in those days any more than that of tuning the press is now.

Gilpin's sermon reveals a very deplorable condition of affairs. He denounces the misappropriation of the incomes of benefices by patrons, so that "gentlemen are parsons and vicars both; nothing can escape them." "Your Grace," addressing the absent King, "may find where gentlemen keep in their hands livings of forty or fifty pounds, and give one that never cometh there five or six pounds." He quotes a case of a living "of an hundred marks by the year, not to say pounds,

which hath been sold for many years, I suppose an hundred save one, and so continueth still. O good St. Ambrose," he cries, "if thou hadst been bishop there thou wouldst never have suffered such wolves to devour the flock! It may well be called a devouring, for this living in a godly, learned pastor's hands might have refreshed five hundred in a year with ghostly food, and all the country round with God's Word: which, as I perceive, in twenty miles' compass hath scarce one man to preach; and yet no place in England more needful, for boys and girls of fourteen and fifteen cannot say the Lord's Prayer. Shall such injury to Christ and His Gospel be suffered in a Christian realm?" Again—"Patrons see that none do their duty; they think as good to put in asses as men. The bishops were never so liberal in making of lewd priests, but they are as liberal in making lewd vicars. I daresay if such a monster as Dervell Gatherel, the idol of Wales, burnt in Smithfield, should have set his hand to a bill to let the patron take the greatest part of the benefits, he might have had a benefice. For all worldly offices they search meet and convenient men: only Christian souls, so dearly bought, are committed without respect to men not worthy to keep sheep." He denounces "dispensations for non-residence and the terrible abuse of pluralities." "Half the clergy were pluralists, or non-residents." He complains of the decay of learning by reason of these and similar abuses, which left no prospect of a decent maintenance for clergymen. "Look upon the two wells of this realm—Oxford and Cambridge—they are almost dried up. The decay of students is so great, there are scarce

left of every thousand a hundred; if they decay so fast in seven years more, there will be almost none at all, and then may the Devil make a triumph." Further on he exclaims:—"A thousand pulpits in England are covered with dust; some have not had four sermons these fifteen or sixteen years, since friars left their limitations; and few of those were worthy of the name of sermons." This was plain speaking, and not one line of the terrible picture was overdrawn. Next he becomes the advocate of the dumb masses against the oppression of magistrates, nobility, and of those in office. "Look in all countries how Lady Avarice hath set on work altogether mighty men, gentlemen, and rich men, to rob and spoil the poor, to turn them from their livings and their right; for ever the weakest go to the wall. And being thus tormented and put from their right at home, they come to London in great numbers, to a place where justice should be had, and there they can have none. They are suitors to great men, and cannot come to their speech; their servants must have bribes, and that no small ones. All love bribes. But such as be so dainty to hear the poor, let them take heed lest God make it as strange to them when they shall call, for as Solomon saith, 'Whoso stoppeth his ear at the crying of the poor, he shall cry and not be heard.'" Again—"When Christ suffered His passion, there was one Barabbas, St. Matthew calleth him a notable thief, a gentleman thief, such as rob now-a-days in velvet coats; the other two were obscure thieves, and nothing famous. The rustical thieves were hanged, and Barabbas was delivered. Even so now-a-days the little thieves are

hanged that steal of necessity, but the great Barabbases have free liberty to rob and to spoil without all measure, in the midst of the city. Alas! silly poor members of Christ, how you be shorn, oppressed, pulled, hauled to and fro on every side; who cannot but lament, if his heart be not of flint? There be a great number every term, and many continually, which lamentably complain for lack of justice, but all in vain." "As for turning poor men out of their holds, they take it for no offence, but say the land is their own, and forget altogether that the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. They turn them out of their shrouds as mice. Thousands in England, through such, beg now from door to door, which have kept honest houses. Would to God we could bear away this brief and short lesson, that what we do to Christ's members on earth, we do to Him. There are who would wish all the people destroyed, to have all the fields brought to a sheep pasture. It is like the mercy of a Bishop of Mayence, in Germany, named Hatto,* which, as the chronicles mention, five hundred years ago, in time of a great dearth, called all the poor people in all the whole country into a great barn, pretending to make a great dole; but having them sure, he fired the barn and burnt them all up, saying, 'These be the mice which devour up the corn.' This was a policy to make bread more cheap, but for this unmerciful mercy God made him an example for all unmerciful men to the world's end; for a multitude of rats came and devoured him in such terrible sort that

* Bishop Hatto. See Longfellow's verses.

where his name was written in windows, walls or hangings, they never ceased until it was razed out."

The sermon is a long one, and perhaps the length of the sermons which the King had to hear on these occasions was one of the reasons of his absence—he was but sixteen at this date;—but it is well worthy of perusal as a specimen of Gilpin's power, and as an illustration of the times. Among his hearers were doubtless persons who were guilty of all the sins he denounced, and it might do them some good to have their own faults and vices painted in such strong colours before their eyes. We do not hear that any offence was taken at this plain speaking; rather, it won the preacher a couple of powerful friends in the earls of Bedford and Leicester,—Leicester one whom Gilpin never could respect, but Bedford a friend often to be appealed to on behalf of persons who needed his help or influence.

I must not leave this sermon without remarking that near the beginning he expresses himself with no uncertain sound as to the iniquities of Rome; he also alludes to the power of the Pope as taken away, and expresses his thankfulness for "our deliverance from that captivity of Babylon." But it is characteristic of the man that he continues: "Most of all it is profitable that we may from our hearts renounce with Babylon all the vices of Babylon. For what did profit the deliverance out of Egypt to those that did still carry Egypt in their minds through the desert!" It was the shocking departure of Rome from the spirit and example of Christ that Gilpin in the first place most deplored, and on which he enlarges at great length in this sermon, a departure which might not

seem irreparable. Subsequent events prove that even at this period Gilpin was not fully persuaded as to the hopelessness of reform from Rome, or as to the duty of an entire coming out of her; or at all events that however for a time convinced, a reaction subsequently set in which gave him great pain and trouble.

Nor may I pass over unnoticed his references to the Word of God as the source of Divine knowledge. "So long as we seek Christ in our own kinsfolk, that is, in our own inventions and devices, we find Him not; but to find Christ, we must accompany these godly persons, Joseph and Mary, unto the Temple of His Holy Word: there Christ is found unto so many as seek Him with such humble spirits and meek hearts as Joseph and Mary did." And he concludes in a like strain, exhorting that "we may so fasten our eyes upon God's Word, that it may continually be a lantern unto our feet, to guide our journey through the desert and dark wilderness of this world; that our eyes be never so blinded with shadows of worldly things as to make us to embrace false, deceitful, and temporal felicity for that which is true, steadfast and everlasting; that 'this candle which shineth now,' as St. Paul saith, 'as through a glass darkly,' when that which is imperfect shall be taken away, may present us to that clear light which never is shadowed with any darkness; that we may behold that blessed sight of the glorious Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to whom be all praise, all honour and glory, world without end."

One impression will certainly be produced on the minds of the readers of this manly, outspoken, and able sermon; that he who could preach thus, whatever his

own opinion of himself might be, was one whose light should not be allowed to remain under a bushel, but ought to be placed on a candlestick (as was now being done) that the Church might be enlightened.

Among those whom this sermon particularly attracted was Secretary Cecil, afterwards Lord Burleigh —a visit which he paid to Gilpin at Houghton will have to be mentioned later on. Gilpin himself tells us that Cecil was the means of obtaining for him at this period a general license for preaching throughout the kingdom. Such licenses were rarely granted, not more than twenty-two or twenty-three having been granted during the reign of Edward: among those who received them were Bishops Jewel, Grindal, and Coverdale. The license was only to be in force during the lifetime of the King, and in effect Gilpin only held it for about half a year, the King dying within a short time of the grant.*

Tunstall, Bishop of Durham, was great-uncle to Gilpin,—uncle to his mother; and at the time of his appointment to Norton, the bishop was in prison in London in consequence of some treasonable designs to which he had been made privy apparently without any wish of his own, and in which he had never joined. He was not released until the accession of Queen Mary.†

The story of Tunstall buying up Tyndale's New

* Carlton, p. 126.

† During Tunstall's imprisonment, in November 1552, a project was under consideration for dividing the diocese of Durham and erecting a new see at Newcastle, with a Cathedral and Dean and Chapter; Ridley was to have had Durham and Grindal Newcastle. But the death of Edward VI. put a stop to this scheme, if it was ever more than an excuse for confiscating the bishopric of Durham. See Burnet's *History of the Reformation*, ii. p. 215; Grindal's *Remains*, Parker Society, p. iii.; and *Diocesan History of Durham*, p. 221.

Testament to burn the copies, and thus supplying unintentionally the funds for a revised edition, is well known; but this act of his notwithstanding, Tunstall was a man of liberal views and a sympathiser with the new learning; perhaps, however, more on its intellectual than on its religious side. In early life he studied Greek literature at Padua. He had been at one time much employed in diplomacy, and in 1516 was sent on an embassy to Bruges with Sir Thomas More, when he became acquainted with Erasmus. They lived in the same house, and became close friends. Erasmus writes thus of him—"We have here Cuthbert Tunstall, a man who not only outdoes all his cotemporaries in knowledge of the learned languages, but is also of an exquisite judgment and clear understanding, and likewise of an unheard-of modesty; moreover, he is a cheerful and pleasant companion without losing his proper gravity. I board with him, which is a great happiness to me." * Tunstall returned Erasmus' affection cordially. In one of his letters to him he writes—"I foresee that our posterity will rival the ancients in every sort of study; and if they be not ungrateful, they will pay the greatest thanks to those who have revived these studies. Go on, and deserve well of posterity, who will never suffer the name of Erasmus to perish." †

More, speaking of Tunstall, says—"No one is more thoroughly conversant in learning of every kind and manners, and no one is a more cheerful companion."

* Hutchinson's *History of Durham*, i. 568.

† M'Intosh's *More*, p. 63; *Erasmi Opera*, iii. p. 267, Tunstall to Erasmus, September 14, 1517.

With this worthy relative Gilpin had frequent interviews while he was making his preparations for going to Norton. There was a deep sympathy between uncle and nephew, and although the bishop never went so far as the nephew, there were many points on which they were agreed—Tunstall was quite alive to many of the unsatisfactory features in the Romish Church.

Gilpin now went down to Norton, the mother parish of Stockton, to commence his work as a parish priest. He held a license, as we have seen, to preach in any part of the kingdom, and from the first seems to have availed himself of his "liberty of prophesying." But his own parish was his first and chief care; and he tells us how, in his preaching there, he handled those points in which he was most grounded, and wherein he was undoubtedly resolved out of the Holy Scriptures. We can easily understand with what eloquence and courage he would speak against the prevailing abuses and vices—here he was in his element;—and how again he would labour to set forth Christ before his people as their Redeemer and Life—here too he was unconscious of any restriction of utterance. But, as an honest man, he felt uneasy to reflect that there were topics which he must shrink from handling because his own mind was not fully made up upon them. It illustrates the uncertainty of his convictions at this period, that although in his sermon at Greenwich he speaks of the Eucharist as now reduced or brought back "to its first institution," referring to Edward VI.'s second Prayer Book, and evidently with approval, yet it appears from his statement to his brother that when at Norton he

was still examining the mass, and that though he did not believe in transubstantiation, he sometimes "read masse, but seldome and privately."* "The abuse" seemed to him at that time, "as farre as he was able to judge, in the too much reverence and grosser worship of the people." Gilpin was very conscientious, and when not quite satisfied as to the propriety of the course he was pursuing—and as he continued his work at Norton he felt less and less satisfied with himself—he could not rest, it spoiled his sleep by night, it paralysed his energies by day. What must he do?

He wrote to his uncle Bishop Tunstall and laid the whole case before him. What would he advise? What *could* he advise but that it was Gilpin's evident duty to himself and to his people to obtain the settlement of his vexed questions, and then to give himself heart and soul, as he would be able to do, to the work of an evangelist? England at that time was no place for hearing both sides and coming to an impartial decision —least of all for a beneficed clergyman. Abroad the air was freer, the space wider, and there were some places, notably Louvain, where many of the most learned men on both sides were to be found, and where religious topics were discussed freely from either standpoint.

This was not the advice of the narrow ecclesiastic, but of a man of enlarged views and of wide sympathies. "Go abroad," he said, "spend a year or two in Germany, France, Holland; put yourself into communication with the ablest men of either side, and read and study for yourself." The advice was excellent; it commended itself at once to Gilpin, and he did

* Carlton, p. 126.

not hesitate to follow it. Ere long he had placed his living in worthy hands, and crossed the seas; and, once more a student, was visiting many of the foreign universities, making Louvain his headquarters for a long period and then removing to Paris. But of this more fully in a subsequent chapter. We may be sure that, with his literary tastes and aptitude for student life, these foreign-spent years, apart from their serious object, must have had many charms for Gilpin.

There was a difficulty, however, before all this could be done, the question of "ways and means." The bishop's idea was for Gilpin to obtain a dispensation for non-residence, and place his parish in the hands of some person whom he could trust. But it was quite against Gilpin's views to retain any responsibility which he could not meet himself, and least of all to take money for a spiritual charge which he could not fulfil. There seem to have been some legal or other difficulties in the way of an actual resignation of Norton, but he did the next best thing in handing over the whole proceeds of the living to a "friend whom he knew to be religious and a scholler, and one that would not be idle in his office," this friend to be properly instituted when the legal process became possible, that is, to the full satisfaction of Bishop Tunstall. "I can never persuade myself," he said, "to take the profit and let another take the pains." The person in whose favour he resigned, or rather to whom he handed over the whole proceeds and responsibility of the living, was one Robert Dalton, vicar of the neighbouring parish of Billingham, who was formally collated in May 1556,

but who no doubt from early in 1553 was to all intents and purposes vicar of Norton.

For his costs on his travels he determined to use what little money he had of his own, and to trust for the rest to Bishop Tunstall's generosity.

Having adopted this course, he went up to London to confer with the bishop and to receive his final instructions.

Great was the bishop's concern when he heard about Norton. "Here are your friends," said he, "endeavouring to provide for you, and you are taking every method to frustrate their endeavours. But be warned, by these courses; depend upon it, you will bring yourself to poverty." Gilpin endeavoured to convince the bishop that he was right in his view of the case—he could not hold the profits of the living, he averred, "with any peace of conscience." "But," saith the bishop, "thou maist hould it with a dispensation, and in this case thou shalt be dispensed withall." "Nay," answered Gilpin, "the Divell will not be restrained by any bonde of dispensation from labouring in mine absence the destruction of my people committed to my charge; and I feare that when God shall call me to an account of my stewardship, it will not serve my turne to make answer that I was dispensed withall whiles the Divell made havock of my flock." * At which answer the bishop seemed offended, but having thus made trial of the sincerity

* Compare Latimer's remarks on priests being comptrollers of the mint.—"Is this a meet office for a priest that hath cure of souls? Is this his charge? I would here ask one question. I would fain know who controlleth the devil at home in his parish while he controlleth the mint?"—Latimer's *Sermons*, i. 63.

of Gilpin's heart, he began to treat him with more and more respect. "Yet did he often threaten him, as Gilpin was wont to say, that 'Father's soule (a familiar word of the bishop's) he would die a beggar."* The high principle of Gilpin contrasts remarkably with the tone of the bishop's advice.

"This Bernard is proving a difficult man to manage," was probably his uncle Tunstall's frequent reflection. In his views he seemed incapable of throwing himself into either camp, and he was troubled with that inconvenient thing, a very scrupulous conscience. He had now thrown away his preferment, and was almost a beggar. Why could he not settle his opinions as easily as other people did, and why should he be more anxious about his flock than his neighbours? Simply because he was one of the salt of the earth. This is one of those men whom God will take good care of, and find for him his proper place and work all in due time.

Whilst in prison Tunstall had employed his leisure in writing two or three books, particularly one on the Lord's Supper. They were not such as he could very well print in England at that period, and especially considering that he himself was a prisoner and under a cloud. He therefore commissioned Gilpin to make it one of his duties when in Paris to get them printed. This Gilpin willingly undertook to do.

The book on the Lord's Supper contained a remarkable and candid acknowledgment of the novelty of the doctrine of transubstantiation, and condemned Pope Innocent III. for declaring the acceptance of

* Carlton, p. 96.

that article of belief to be necessary to salvation; and during Queen Mary's reign it was usual for Romanists to assert that Gilpin had garbled the text of his uncle's book. But Bishop Carlton relates that on one occasion, "in mine hearing when I was a scholler under him at Houghton, Francis Wickliff told Mr. Gilpin what was muttered touching the book; whereupon he, having disproved that suspicion by many reasons, at the last produced the letters of Cuthbert Tunstall, wherein the bishop gave him very great thankes, because he had been both faithfull and diligent in the edition of that worke." *

He cannot have been more than a few months at Norton—not long enough to make his mark there—but quite long enough to find out the kind of work which was to be done, and the sort of workman required.

Gilpin was, I presume, the first incumbent of Norton after it ceased to be a collegiate church, his predecessor, John Rudd, having been appointed in 1539. The foundation had in Gilpin's time been despoiled of its ancient endowments, including the parochial tithes, and the income must have been very limited. Previously the College of Norton had consisted of eight prebendaries or portionists.

The population was small at Norton itself—perhaps between four and five hundred. The village consisted of one long street nearly a mile in length, with the church standing on the highest ground at the north end. It is an old church, cruciform, and contains some remains of Saxon architecture. The present population of the parish is about 3000.

* Carlton, p. 100.

Norton is the mother parish of Stockton, and Stockton, up to the beginning of the eighteenth century, was served by curates appointed by the vicar of Norton. In 1712 the parish church of Stockton was consecrated, and the dependency became a separate parish. Since then the daughter has far outstripped the mother.

CHAPTER IV.

GILPIN IN SEARCH OF TRUTH.

GILPIN had now left England in search of truth. The reformed faith was being pushed with a high hand at home, and anything like full and equal discussion with men of both sides was out of the question; besides that, it was hardly possible for Gilpin, holding so high a position in public estimation, and having recently been appointed to a living, to go about from learned man to learned man, of either party, for the satisfaction of his own theological views. On the Continent he could take very much the position of a private individual, and would enjoy infinitely greater freedom of intercourse and discussion, besides that many of the leaders of religious thought of the day were foreigners and only to be met abroad. Free then from the responsibility of any spiritual charge, and intent only on ascertaining truth, and with ample time at his command (he really stayed abroad for three years), he was most favourably situated for solving the difficult questions that had troubled him now for so many years.

After visiting his brother George at Mechlin, he made his way to Louvain, at that time a great centre of learning and especially of divinity, and the residence

of many very eminent divines on both sides of the question, and where the most controverted topics of religion were constantly being discussed with great freedom.

Gilpin here spent a considerable time, about two years, attending lectures and public disputations, and reading for himself and talking over the questions which perplexed him in private with friends and others. "He was present at all public readings and disputations; he committed everything material to writing; all his opinions he re-examined; proposed his doubts in private to his friends, and in every respect made the best use of his time." *

While he was at Louvain, and thus employed, the news arrived of the death of Edward VI. and of Queen Mary's accession to the crown, news which ere long was emphasised by the arrival of crowds of English Protestants in the Low Countries, exiles for their faith, who had left their homes because of the persecuting spirit which threatened to deluge the land with blood.

The accession of Queen Mary, however, brought in its train one satisfactory piece of intelligence, namely, that his uncle Bishop Tunstall had been released from the Tower, and was restored to the bishopric of Durham.

Soon afterwards Gilpin received a letter from his brother George, requesting him to come at once to Mechlin, as he had something important to discuss with him. When Gilpin arrived, he discovered that the important business was that the bishop had written to George to say that he had a valuable living to dispose

* Gilpin's *Life of Bernard Gilpin*, p. 94.

of in his diocese, and he wished George to persuade his brother to accept it. All the arguments, however, he could use were of no avail; the danger of offending the bishop, the improbability of the bishop living much longer, and of other bishops troubling themselves so much about his preferment, &c.; but Bernard had but one answer, "his conscience would not suffer him to comply." George replied that "his living could be as well attended to in his absence by another as by himself, and that the bishop approved of such an arrangement." It was all of no use. "If a bishop's judgment," said Gilpin, "were to be the rule of my actions, I should comply, but as I am to stand or fall by my own judgment, the case is different."

Gilpin's resolution was unshaken that he would hold no living which he could not personally take charge of, and that in his present state of mind it would be wrong for him to undertake any parochial charge. On this occasion he addressed the following letter to the bishop, which, besides giving us another glimpse of the integrity of the man, is also interesting for the details it supplies of his life and circumstances:—

"My very honourable good Lord, and most worthy ever to be honoured by me: I thought it not fitting to conceale from your Lordship that my brother hath written unto me of late, that setting all excuse aside I should give him meeting at Mechlin, because he had something to say unto me touching very necessary affaires which could not be dispatched by letters. When we were met, I understood that his businesse with me was nothing else but to try me, if I would take upon me a living, whiles my selfe in the meane while should remaine a student in the University. But had

I knowne before hand that this was the cause of my journey I should not have thought it necessary to have interrupted my studies with going to Mechlin. For now I confesse I have discussed it with all the learned, but especially with the holy Prophets, and with the most auncient and most godly writers since the time of our Saviour; so that I am fully resolved so long as I live never to burden my conscience in this case, nor to keepe a living in mine owne charge with condition to live from it. He answered that your Lordship had written unto him that you would gladly conferre a living upon me, and that your Lordship and mine other friends, whereof himselfe was one, judged mee too scrupulous in conscience in this case. Whereunto I answered, if I be somewhat too scrupulous (as I thinke I am not), yet it is a matter of that nature, that I had rather be a little too strict, then to give my conscience too much scope herein. Forasmuch as I am once perswaded, that I shall not offend God in refusing such a living as I cannot be resident upon; so long as I doe not censure evill of other men, as I hope I never shall; yea I pray daily for all those who have the care of soules, that they may be able so to give an account unto God of the charge committed unto them as may be most for the glory of God and the edification of his Church.

"He tould me also that your Lordship would not confer any charge upon me but such a one as should be served as well, or perhaps better in mine absence, then if I were there my selfe. Whereunto I answered, that I doubted not but that there might be in England a great number of men farre more able then my selfe to take the cure upon them: And therefore I wish above all things that they may retaine both the place and the benefit, and feede both the bodies and the soules, as I suppose all good pastors bound in conscience to doe. But for mine owne part I cannot in conscience reape benefit from that place, wherein another man

bestoweth his indeavours. For though any other should teach and preach for me, as constantly and industriously as ever Saint Augustine did, yet cannot I thinke my selfe discharged by another mans paines-taking. But if yet I should be persuaded thus to offer violence to my conscience, upon condition to remaine either here or in any other University, my disquiet of conscience would never permit me to profit in my study.

"At this present, I praise God, I have obtained a comfortable privacy in my studies neere to a Monastery of Minorite Friers, so that I have opportunity to make use of an excellent library of theirs so often as I will. I frequent the company of the best schollers, nor was I ever more desirous to learne. Hereupon being given to understand by my brother George, that your Lordship had some thoughts of bestowing a living upon me, which thing might interrupt the course of my studies, I emboldened my selfe (upon the experience which I have had of your Lordship's love towards me) to unlock the closet of my thoughts unto your goodnesse freely; humbly beseeching that your Lordship will be pleased to permit me to live free from a pastorall charge, that I may the more quietly apply my studies. And forasmuch as I understand that your Lordship is sollicitous, how I should be provided for, if God should call your Lordship (who are now well in yeares) out of this world, I beseech you that the thought thereof may no more disturbe you. For if I shall be brought low in meanes, I doubt not but in short time to be able to obtaine some lecture either in this University or else where, where I shall not lose my time, a course which is much more pleasing unto me, then if I should take upon me a pastorall charge. I beseech Christ preserve your Lordship. From Lovaine the 22. of November, 1554."

Bishop Tunstall could not take offence at such a

letter as this; nay, its effect was only to make him respect and value his nephew more than ever. "Now tell me," says Bishop Carlton after giving this letter, "which one of all those gaping rookes of our time hath endeavoured with more art to acquire than this man to decline a spirituall living?"

When he had used to the full the opportunities of inquiry, learning, and observation which Louvain offered, he removed from thence to Paris. Here one of his first tasks was to procure the printing of the books on the Lord's Supper and the other works which Bishop Tunstall had charged him with.

As at Louvain, so at Paris he had the best opportunities of communicating with the most learned theologians which the city supplied. But he could obtain little satisfaction, as "for the most part they answered his questions, not as if they regarded the pacification of conscience, which he aimed at onely, but the establishment of the traditions of the Church."

In Paris he met with an old college friend, Mr. Neal of New College, who had helped him years before in his study of Greek and Hebrew at Oxford, but who was now become a very bigoted Papist; Gilpin could, however, talk with him more freely than with others.* They had a long discussion on the worship of images:

* This same Mr. Neal became afterwards chaplain to Bishop Bonner, and enjoys the unenviable notoriety of being the sole authority quoted as a witness of the fabled Nag's Head consecration. It is very curious that another person of the same name, Neale the author of the *History of the Puritans*, should have done more than almost any one else in more recent times to give currency to this absurd slander. See Fuller's *Church History*, ii. 516, for a full account of the facts of the case.

Gilpin had been much shocked at "hearing the Papists condemne idolatry in their discourses, and yet permitting to the people everywhere the adoration of images." Neale brought forward the usual distinctions between idols and images, and between *Latria* and *Doulia*, and when Gilpin demonstrated the insufficiency of his arguments, he could only reply "that the ordinances of the Church are not to be altered without mature deliberation." "True," said Gilpin, "but if so, it remaineth only that I specially endeavour to change myself, and to draw near to the sincere worship of God, as His grace shall enable me."

In conversing with other Romish advocates, he would frequently ask, "Whether such and such bad consequences might not arise from such and such doctrines," and receive replies like the following: "That that was not to be regarded—the Church could not subsist without them; and little inconveniences must be borne with."

In Paris and Antwerp, which he also visited, as well as wherever he went on the Continent, he saw a great deal of the evil teaching and evil results of Popery, more than he had ever seen before; and this, he says, "did more and more estrange me from the Popish religion." Meanwhile he never relaxed in his diligent study of the Holy Scriptures and of the writings of the Fathers, and was continually thereby being led to observe many things which alienated his heart from Romanism.

"I observed," he tells us in his personal record, "in that Church notable corruptions of the doctrine of the Bible; many things in the Sacraments insti-

tuted against Scripture, some Sacraments lately added: in the Sacrament of the Supper the one halfe taken away; the fiction of Transubstantiation brought in; traditions of the Church made equall to the Word of God, and to the Holy Scriptures, and to be imbraced with the same pious affection; the worship of images brought into the Church; all things performed in the Church before the people in an unknowne language; but above all the rest the question concerning Antichrist troubled me, because it seemed not to me a safe thing to make a seperation from the Popish Church, except I were first fully resolved that the Pope is Antichrist; and in this point I cannot easily expresse with how many difficulties and distractions I was daily opposed."

He had now been about three years abroad, and the result was a clearer insight into the errors, doctrinal and practical, of the Romish system, and a greater abhorrence of the insincerity and duplicity of its teachers. There was nothing more that he could learn there.

His views as to the presence of Christ in the sacrament of His Body and Blood were still undecided, though he had renounced transubstantiation; and there was but one question unsolved which made him still hesitate about throwing in his lot with the reformers, and that was the question of breaking the unity of the Church. Was the Church of Rome the one visible Church, the Bride of Christ? If so, it was schism to leave her fold. Or was she what he had long suspected, Antichrist? If Antichrist, then only, in his view, it became a duty to break off from her

communion. This question was still a perplexity—he could not yet make up his mind; and staying any longer from home was not likely to help him to decide.

The Marian persecutions were at this time raging in England, and his friends earnestly advised him not to return while this fury lasted: they urged that it was like putting his neck into the halter, it was running a totally unnecessary risk, it was little less than madness. But Gilpin decided on returning.

Bishop Tunstall probably pressed him to do so, being still desirous of finding him a living in his own diocese, and fearing lest, as he was infirm and aged, the means of doing so should soon pass out of his hands.

The bishop's arguments were supported in Gilpin's mind by the hope that reforms would be carried out by the Romanists themselves now that they were in power. In King Edward's time many of the leaders had acknowledged that the worship of "images, reliques, pilgrimages, buying and selling of masses and trentalls, and many other things were superstitious, and had promised reformation, and professed that it was meete the Church should be purged of them, which thing they said they would gladly doe, if ever the power came into their hands againe."

Honest Gilpin was trusting that these fair promises would now be acted upon, and possibly he hoped that that painful step, from which he so much shrank, of separation from Rome, might thus be spared him. And so he conceived it his duty to return; his work abroad was completed, and the work to be done at home seemed to demand his presence.

Gilpin's departure from England having taken place within a short time, perhaps a few months after his appointment to Norton, *i.e.*, probably early in 1553, his return may be dated early in 1556.

It was on February 5, 1555, early on the cold winter morning, that John Rogers, the first of the Marian martyrs, was burnt at Smithfield—the first of that long procession of martyrs which for three years defiled through the streets of London and other towns and villages, and which, as Latimer said to Ridley at the stake, "lighted such a candle in England as by God's grace shall never be put out."

Rogers' wife and eleven children, one at the breast, met him by the way, and it was remarked during all that fiery trial that married men and the parents of many children met their deaths far more courageously than others.

The martyrdoms of Rogers and of others of like saintliness and courage was the baptism of fire which the reformed faith needed in England, and did more to win over the affections of the people to the new order of things than anything else could.

The experiment of burning out the Reformation had a trial of three years, and in that period three hundred victims perished at the stake, an adequate experiment surely, and not *in corpore vili;* and it proved how vain such methods are. It was the policy of making a solitude and calling it peace: and its direct result was that the sympathies of the nation were for the burnt-out ones and their creed.

Without the fires of Smithfield, the Reformation would have been a weak and flaccid thing incapable

of offering any sustained resistance to the organised attacks of the other side, and unsupported by the hearts of the people. But the martyrs made it popular and gave it force, and this darkest hour achieved for it elements of stability and influence which hitherto had been much needed.

Gilpin arrived in England when the work of persecution was at its height, when it had been going on for a year and had two more years to run. It was a time when reformers were only too glad to leave the country if they could, and Gilpin's return is an evidence of the divergence between his views and hopes and theirs.

Doubtless he was familiar with the dissensions which were weakening and dividing the refugees abroad, and knew how his countrymen were coming under the influence of Calvin at Geneva, and of Knox at Frankfort, while they lost more and more their sympathy with moderate, and, as he held, sound reforms. "The troubles at Frankfort" were exciting attention at this period, and the disorders there prevailing, which were not ended by the retirement of John Knox, were not likely to induce such a man as Gilpin to throw in his lot with any section of the exiled reformers.*

There would appear to him to be more hope for real and substantial reform at home than abroad. Something, at all events, might be saved in England from the general cataclysm, while all the old landmarks seemed likely to be swept away abroad.

* For a succinct account of "the troubles at Frankfort," I cannot do better than refer to Carwithen's *History of the Church of England*, vol. I, chap. xiv. p. 476.

A man can only act up to the best light he possesses. It was not cowardice nor any low object which brought Gilpin back—we can see that it needed more courage to return to England than to stay at Paris or Louvain. He had got all he could get abroad, and he longed for work; he had not quite lost his confidence in the professions of Romish reformers; and that difficult question of the Primacy of the Pope was still unsettled in his mind. Then there was probably the urgent entreaty of Bishop Tunstall for his return, and the prospect of useful work in the diocese of Durham, and the possibility that in England he might be able to do something to promote internal reforms in the Church. And so Gilpin came back to England in the early months of 1556, and put his neck into the halter, as his friends thought.

Queen Mary died November 17, 1558, when all things were going wrong at home and abroad, disaster succeeding disaster, and when the conscience of the nation was horrified at the long "Reign of Terror." There were ominous threatenings of a general revolt, which only the death of the Queen averted.

Never was there a greater sense of relief in England, than when it was known that Mary was no more; and the accession of Queen Elizabeth was hailed with a burst of enthusiastic delight.

But Gilpin had two years and a half in England, after returning from his voluntary exile, ere the reign of Mary ended. It was a time of much spiritual trial to him,—illusions were vanishing one after another, hopes were being disappointed, while his own position became more and more painful and difficult. It is

through much tribulation that earnest souls and honest hearts pass into the fuller light. As to the peril to his life, his friends were not far wrong in their anticipations, as we shall see; but the Lord delivered him out of the hands of his enemies, for the great work for which he was intended.

CHAPTER V.

BISHOP TUNSTALL.

ARRIVED in England, Gilpin at once proceeded to the diocese of Durham, to his uncle Bishop Tunstall.

We have already had occasion to notice the moderation of this bishop. Some people called it easiness and indifference, doing him thus scant justice. He still held to the general scheme of Romish doctrine, but saw much that needed amendment, and had considerable sympathy with many of the opinions of the opposite party. He had already taken the oath of supremacy to Henry VIII. and Edward VI., but it was no doubt a relief to him when Queen Mary re-established the religious supremacy of Rome; and when Elizabeth ascended the throne he declined the oath to her, as all the other bishops except the Bishop of Llandaff did. Burnet thinks he declined the oath on this occasion rather for decency's sake than for any doctrinal scruples; but we need not judge him so uncharitably. He was too old to throw himself into the Reform, and perhaps in his old age much of his earlier enthusiasm for Rome had revived. He was committed to the Tower by Elizabeth, but not detained

there very long, and found a haven of rest ultimately in the house of the Archbishop of Canterbury, where he tranquilly spent the short remainder of a very long life.

Tunstall died on November 18, 1559, aged eighty-five, and was buried in the chancel of Lambeth church. The following epitaph was inscribed on his tombstone:—

ANGLIA CUTHBERTUM TUNSTALLUM MŒSTA REQUIRIT,
CUJUS SUMMA DOMI LAUS ERAT ATQUE FORIS.
RHETOR, ARITHMETICUS, JURISCONSULTUS ET ÆQUI,
LEGATUSQUE FUIT; DEINQUE PRÆSUL ERAT.
ANNORUM SATUR, ET MAGNORUM PLENUS HONORUM,
VERTITUR IN CINERES AUREUS ISTE SENEX.
VIXIT ANNOS LXXXV. OBIIT
18 NOV. MCCCCCLIX.*

Strype says, "Before his death, by the archbishop's means, he was brought off from papistical fancies." † But this seems hardly likely. He went to Lambeth at the end of September 1559; early in October Parker had reported only little success in his endeavours to prevail with "Mr. Tonstal," and writes as having apparently little hope; the poor old bishop died on November 18, and the archbishop, writing to Cecil about his funeral, gives no hint of any change in his views. ‡

Now, however, Tunstall had been sent back to his old see of Durham, with strict injunctions to extirpate heresy out of his diocese. Probably to extirpate heresy from the diocese of Durham would not have

* Hutchinson's *History of Durham*, i. 542.
† Strype's *Parker*, vol. I. x. p. 94.
‡ *Parker Correspondence*, Letters 63–65, and 74.

been a very heavy task in those days, there was far too little of it; the reformed opinions had made very little way in the North, and the clergy generally were in no degree favourable to them. It was darkness, not light, that prevailed here; and indeed up to the time of King Edward's death no notice of his proclamations for a change of worship had ever reached some of the Durham districts, those in authority conceiving themselves interested in keeping back this information.

Bishop Tunstall, moreover, was hardly the man to make a persecutor of,—his gentle disposition and enlightened ideas would make it simply impossible for him to imprison and burn the reformers; and so, when other bishops were showing their zeal by the amount of their persecution, there was very little of that sort of thing to be observed in the diocese of Durham, and no burnings there. Fuller says—"The bishopric of Durham had halcyon days of ease under God and good Cuthbert Tunstall, a learned man, of a sweet disposition, rather devout to follow his own, than cruel to persecute the conscience of others." * Foxe tells a story which shows his lenity. A Mr. Russell had been accused to him at Auckland of heresy, whom he had slightly examined, and then dismissed. His chancellor pressed for a further examination. "No," said the bishop, "we have hitherto lived peaceably among our neighbours; let us continue to do so, and not bring this man's blood upon us." An attitude like this of course made many persons suspect the soundness of the bishop's opinions.†

* Fuller's *Church History*, Book viii. Cent. xvi., ch. 21, 22.

† Hutchinson's *History of Durham*, i. 545.

From Tunstall Gilpin received a warm and hearty welcome. The two men might not see quite eye to eye, but in spirit they were one; and if the bishop wished to help Gilpin, he also desired to confer a great benefit upon his diocese by the introduction of such a truly religious and worthy man.

Ere long, probably soon after his arrival in 1556,* Gilpin was appointed Rector of Easington and Archdeacon of Durham, the rectory being annexed to the archdeaconry. He was thus placed in a position in which he could exert a good influence, not only on a large parish, but also on a considerable proportion of the clergy of the diocese. The appointment may not have been a good one in view of the commission which Tunstall had received to harry false doctrine—*i.e.*, non-Roman doctrine—out of his diocese, but with a view to the paramount object of the spiritual welfare of both clergy and people nothing better could have been done.

Gilpin at this period was in a very unsettled state of mind. As regards doctrine he knew that the Church of Rome was grievously wrong; in practice he was satisfied that in all directions amendment was needed, and in many respects he had a warm sympathy with the opinions and teachings of the reformers. But the accession of Queen Mary had probably, as already suggested, driven him more back upon his old hopes of an internal reform. He says he often spoke to his "very loving friends and kindred" on this. Their answers, however, were anything but satisfactory. "If," they said, "we once confesse any errours at all, the people

* Hutchinson's *History of Durham*, ii. 283.

will straightway cry out that many other things are also worthy to be reformed, and so they will be still growing upon us, that we shall have never done reforming." "These things wounded me grievously," he continues, "and drave me to seeke out for peace of conscience." In this delusive hope, apparently, he had accepted these appointments.

But when he was convinced that it was a vain hope, and we may be sure that he took a good deal of convincing, his position must have become very painful and very difficult. Fearing to speak out boldly, knowing himself the object of suspicion, conscious that his position was becoming less and less tenable as hopes of reform died out, a great part of the time between his return to England and the death of Mary must have been a constant worry and pain. All the time, however, he was doing a great work for God, but it was with a wearing sense of insecurity, and in the occasional adoption of a system of reserve and concealment which must have been intolerably distressing to his mind.

He found his parish in great disorder, and at once set himself to the work of reformation. Publicly and privately he reproved vice and irreligion, while he laboured to set forth repentance and salvation by Christ. Soon the interest of the people was roused, they came eagerly to hear his sermons, and the truth began to effect its transformations.

But the neighbouring clergy, hearing what was going on, and glad to find fault with one whose zeal so sternly rebuked their own neglect, raised an alarm against him because he preached Christ, and never said a word "about transubstantiation, purgatory, holy water,

the worshipping of images, the invocation of saints, and the like."

"A very small matter," he tells us, "brought him into danger. An honest matron, because in her pangs of childbirth she had often called upon God, was grievously checked by the other good women because she had not called upon the blessed Virgin. 'I have heard,' saith she, 'a certain famous preacher, one Gilpin, a man that came lately out of France; if he will advise me to call upon the saints, I will take his counsell in that point.' I tolde them that I durst not persuade any one to invocate the saints, but that those who call onely upon God for help in all their dangers, have a commandement from God so to doe, and a firme promise for the infallible comforting of their conscience. This occasion stirred me up many foes."

But possibly the clergy would not have troubled themselves so much about Gilpin if he had not denounced their glaring faults and vices, and launched out against non-residence and pluralities. He was touching them in a very tender point when he took this course, and as he spoke out what he felt without any reserve, and called things by their right names, it was not long ere Bernard Gilpin, Archdeacon of Durham, was the best-hated man in the diocese, and one in whose downfall very few of the clergy but felt that they had a personal interest.

In those days the clerical order had sunk very low; a considerable proportion of parishes were served by priests utterly ignorant and unlettered. "*The best that could be gotten,*" says Fuller, "were placed in pastoral charges. Alas! tolerability was eminency in that age;

a rush-candle seems a torch where no brighter light was ever seen before."

Covetousness, pride, carnal liberty, and other vices, coupled with deplorable ignorance, characterised the clergy when Gilpin was archdeacon, and he could not prophesy smooth things or hold his peace.

Some indication of the condition of matters is afforded by the injunctions and visitation questions of the bishops. It will be observed that these injunctions and visitation questions refer to different periods extending over twenty-four years, and during which the country had veered from the Reform to Popery and back to the Reform again, and it might be supposed that such changes would have produced immense changes in the *personnel* of the clergy. But this was not the case; and fewest were the changes in the North of England. The rank and file of the clergy remained much the same, except such changes as deaths caused, under Mary as they had been under Edward, and again under Elizabeth as they had been under Mary. On Mary's accession possibly some few were deprived in the North, but not many, the reforms of Edward having hardly had time to penetrate so far; on Elizabeth's accession hardly any deprivations were made, if any, in these districts.

Among Cranmer's visitation questions in 1547, occurs the following:—"Whether any of the clergy be common haunters and resorters to taverns or alehouses, giving themselves to drinking, rioting, or playing at unlawful games?"—"whether any be common drunkards, swearers, or blasphemers of the name of God?"—and "whether any are men of known immoral

lives, or be common evil-livers and receivers of such evil persons." *

Bishop Hooper at his primary visitation in 1550 had to ask his clergy—"How many commandments? Where written? Can you say them by heart? What are the Articles of the Christian faith? Can you repeat them? Can you recite the Lord's Prayer?" †

One of Grindal's injunctions to the clergy of York in 1571 is as follows:—"Ye shall not keep or suffer to be kept, in your parsonage or vicarage houses, any ale-houses, tippling-houses, or taverns, nor shall sell beer, or wine, nor any of you keep any bad characters in your house, or be an incontinent liver given to drunkenness or idleness." ‡

Here is a picture of clerical conscientiousness in the North of England, taken from a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury. "It is lamentable to see how negligently they say any service, and how seldom. Your cures are all, except Rochdale, as far out of order as any in the country. Whalley hath as ill a vicar as the worst. The Bishop of Man liveth here at ease, and as merry as Pope Joan. The Bishop of Chester hath compounded with my lord of York for his visitation, and gathereth up the money by his servants, but never a word spoken of any visitation or reformation; and that he saith he doth out of friendship, because he will not trouble the country, nor put them to charge in calling them together."

One of Latimer's stories illustrates the general

* Cranmer's *Works*, ii. 158.
† Blunt's *History of the Reformation*, p. 160.
‡ Grindal's *Remains*, p. 130.

neglect of teaching and preaching in and before the Reformation period. When a bishop complained, he tells that the bell which should have rung him into a certain town "lacked a clapper," and could not ring; one of the bystanders remarked,—"But why, my lord, doth your lordship make so great a matter of this bell? Here is a bell," and he pointed to the pulpit, "that hath lacked a clapper these twenty years."

The system of non-residence and pluralities had grown to be enormous hindrances to the religious work of the Church. Doubtless in some, perhaps many cases, pluralities were rendered almost a necessity by the absorption of the incomes of benefices by monastic impropriators, and after Henry VIII.'s time by lay impropriators; things, however, being worse under the lay than they had been under the monastic absorber. The monks, it is true, gave only a miserable stipend to their vicar,—"But now," says one Henry Brinkton in a singular address to both Houses of Parliament shortly after the dissolution of the monasteries, "there is no vicar at all, but the farmer is vicar and parson together, and only an old castaway monk or friar, which can scarcely say his matins, is hired for twenty or thirty shillings, meat and drink; yea, in some places for meat and drink alone without any wages. I know, and not I alone, but twenty thousand men know more than five hundred vicarages and parsonages thus well and gospelly served after the new Gospel of England." *

For such a state of things pluralities was a bad, but sometimes it was the only alternative. But it cannot

* Kenneth on *Impropriations*, p. 131, quoted in Blunt's *History of the Reformation*, p. 143.

be maintained that a desire to deal with a difficult economic question was the sole reason for pluralities. They were an old sore, and had their source somewhere among the less estimable qualities of depraved human nature.

The scandal proved long lived, and has hardly disappeared even in our own days. It may be remembered that "pluralities" was one of the questions discussed at the Hampton Court Conference, Lord Ellesmere putting it thus, that he wished that "some parsons might have single coats before others have doublets." Bishop Sancroft's reply, "But a doublet is necessary in cold weather," may be said to have shelved the question for two centuries.*

The following may be taken as specimens of pluralists of the early half and the middle of the sixteenth century:

Richard Layton, LL.D., Archdeacon of Bucks, Rector of Brempton, co. Northampton, Prebendary of St. Paul's, and Rector of Sedgefield, in or about 1535.†

William Frankleyn, Gilpin's predecessor in Houghton, was appointed to that living in 1528. In 1538 he was made Dean of Windsor, and about the same time Rector of Chalfonte in Bucks; he was also Master of St. Giles' Hospital at Keypier. Subsequently, under not very reputable circumstances, he resigned the Deanery of Windsor, but retained his other preferments. He died about 1555.‡

* *Monthly Packet*, 1883, p. 46.

† Blunt's *Chester-le-Street*, p. 172.

‡ See Hutchinson's *Durham*, ii. 283.

Anthony Belasyse, doubtless one of the family of Henknowl and Houghton, became Master of Sherburn Hospital in 1545, for which he resigned most of his other preferments, which had been as follows:—Rector of Whickham, Rector of Brancepeth, Prebendary of Westminster, Ripon, Auckland, and Lincoln, Archdeacon of Colchester, Master of St. Edmund's Hospital, Gateshead, and a Master in Chancery. He was ordained in 1533.*

It cannot be pretended that cases of which these are a sample were merely a contrivance to meet a difficulty in working ill-endowed parishes.

Thus, then, what with ignorance, carnal abominations, neglect of duty, incapability for the office, and the lack of any deep convictions of truth or of responsibility which was natural among such men, the clergy were anything but burning and shining lights, and an earnest straightforward man coming amongst them with the responsibility of an archdeacon could hardly fail to denounce in the strongest terms such intolerable evils. Gilpin, speaking of how all this moved him, says that these abuses and wrongs reigning among all sorts and degrees of people, "but especially among us priests, who ought to be the salt of the earth, have oftentimes broke my sleepes."

Accordingly, he took every opportunity of reproving the enormities he observed. With the better-disposed of the clergy he used gentler methods, but the obstinate and hardened he reproved and rebuked with all authority. When thus engaged he tells us, "mine

* Surtees' *History of Durham.*

adversaries cryed out that all such as broached these ideas would proove hereticks quickly"—a hint of the line they would adopt in dealing with him.

In the cause of religion he feared no man, and neither position nor influence could obtain an acquittal from his censures. At his visitation especially, and wherever his audience was chiefly clerical, he was in the habit of expressing himself against whatever was wrong with a zeal which might have been deemed affected in one of a less approved sincerity.

Pluralists and non-residence he could never away with, he loudly protested that in every point of view they were deplorable—against the parishes, against the pluralist's own soul, against the general interests of the clergy. "While three parts out of four of the clergy," he would say, "were picking what they could get off a common, the rest were growing wanton with stall-feeding." His predecessor in Easington, as in Houghton subsequently, had been a pluralist, and he inherited in his own parishes some of the bad harvest of the system. He longed to see parishes well supplied, he felt how grand was the office and message of the minister of Christ, how incalculable the interests committed to his charge; and his heart sank when he saw how miserably short of his ideal the reality around him was.

It may be mentioned as illustrating the incompetence and ignorance of the clergy, that Bishop Barnes, at the beginning of his episcopate, commenced a system of educating his clergy by requiring each of them to give an account of the contents of one of the Gospels, or to learn an Epistle, such as that of Jude, off by

heart, or to perform some other Scriptural task each year. Such of the "licensed readers as had profited well in their examinations were licensed to preach once a month, or once a quarter, having certain books appointed from whose doctrine they should not swerve, but for the most part translate. The authors then most in esteem for this purpose were Melanchthon, Bullinger, Hemingius, &c." *

In June 1577 we learn that several had not completed their tasks, and were allowed until Michaelmas. Gray of St. John's had done nothing, and "was pronounced contumacious." The more learned clergy, among whom Gilpin of course was ranked, were excused from this task.†

It was generations ere the Church of England could vindicate herself from the ignominy of such a clerical staff. She "had not altogether recovered herself in the days of Herbert, who was thought by his worldly-minded friends 'to have lost himself in a humble way' when he took orders, and who himself (which is more to the purpose) unambitious of distinction as he was become, speaks of his profession in his *Country Parson* as one of general ignominy. It required the Augustan age of our divines,—the age of a Hall, an Andrews, a Hammond, a Sanderson, a Taylor, a Barrow, a South—to intervene," ‡ that the Church of England might achieve a dignified position, and her clergy might take rank amongst the most cultivated and respected of the realm.

* Dr. Thomas Jackson's *Inordinate Liberty of Prophesying*, iii. 273, quoted in Surtees Society vol. for 1850, p. 21, note.

† Surtees Society vol. for 1850, p. 73.

‡ Blunt's *History of the Reformation*, p. 161.

But Gilpin's lot was cast in the worst of times, and with his eye fixed upon the highest ideals, and holding an office which gave him liberty and right to speak, he cried aloud and spared not—a sort of John Baptist, "crying in the wilderness." As long as he was archdeacon there was no rest for selfish ease, or vicious indulgence, or greedy gain. The Babylonish vice, and the shekels of silver and the wedge of gold that Achan had hidden, were dragged out into the daylight, and the interests of the parishes never lacked an eloquent, and if need was, an indignant advocate; while ignorance and godlessness could not, as of yore, lift up their heads among the best. Such an archdeacon could scarcely be popular in Durham or any other diocese three hundred years ago.

Everybody felt uneasy when they could not do as they had ever done without reproof—Gilpin made a very uncomfortable Archdeacon of Durham. The security and quiet of sin and neglect are at an end when wisdom and faithfulness hold the reins and will not hold their tongues.

Gilpin knew human nature well; all his conduct through life witnesses to his deep skill in the lore of humanity. He spoke out therefore with a full consciousness of the risk he ran; but he was there for a certain object, and was responsible to God, and so could not be silent.

The examples of holy men in Scripture, and especially the life of the Master, were his inspiration—personal peril and the hatred of evil men could not move him. If his endeavours could be serviceable to religion, if they could set any bounds to vice, or bring

any man to repentance, it was a crime in his eyes to be passive. He had accepted an appointment, and could not shrink from any part of its responsibility. In his opinion there was no greater breach of trust, or one which was more destructive of the common good, than to consider public offices only as private endowments.

The good rector was therefore also the good archdeacon, and the people of his parish and the clergy of his archdeaconry were not slow in finding it out—each man to his own gain or loss.

Bishop Tunstall often warned Gilpin that he was bringing a hornet's nest about his ears by his outspoken reproofs—reminding him how prudently one in his position should behave. Warnings of prudence where no principle was involved were never thrown away on Gilpin, but in this case a principle *was* involved; he must be true to his charge, and therefore he could not be silent.

Soon the clergy were up in arms; it was a sort of general conspiracy to find out a way between the joints of his armour. "We shall not find any occasion against this man, except we find it concerning his orthodoxy." Every word of his was discussed, his sermons were analysed and taken to pieces, to discover materials out of which to patch up a charge of heresy. "At length," to let Gilpin tell the story in his own words,* "having preached two or three sermons at Newcastle, I began to explaine my conscience more at large; where there were gathered twelve or thirteene articles against me, and sent to the bishop. And now had mine adversaries

* Carlton, p. 129.

of the clergy whom I had grievously provoked, obtained what they had long looked for. Nor would they give over untill the bishop had called me before their faces, to examine me in the point of the sacrament." Efforts had for some time been made to prejudice the bishop against Gilpin: but of course such efforts were thrown away on Tunstall. When the cause came before the bishop he showed Gilpin as much favour as he durst. He took care to press his accused friend only in points in which he knew him able to bear examination, and brought him off innocent. As Gilpin says—"In transubstantiation he would not trouble me; onely he enquired concerning the reall presence, which I granted, and so was freed out of that danger."

Such an escape was, however, anything but satisfactory to Gilpin's conscience. He says, "As touching the reall presence I found not myselfe fully resolved—I supposed that therein lay a mystery above my capacity. Neverthelesse my conscience did sometimes chide me, for that I had before them yeelded in expresse words to a point which seemed unto me doubtfull. But I hoped that God would pardon my ignorance, and in time bring me to a greater light of knowledge." Thus was the good man chafing in the fetters by which he was bound.

His enemies would not discontinue their attacks; other charges were made against him from time to time, and it was plain that there was no peace for him if they could prevent it. His words were frequently perverted; a letter of his, which his biographer Gilpin had seen, was written to free himself from one

of these slanderous perversions. It was stated that he had expressed the opinion "that it was as lawful to have two wives as two livings." He remembered indeed that he had once been asked—"Whether of the two were worse?" and that he had carelessly answered, "He thought them both bad." But to make this mean that "both were equally bad," and "that one was as lawful as the other" was, he thought, a very disingenuous proceeding.*

Harassed by opposition and persecution, and overworked in his two offices as rector of Easington and archdeacon, and perhaps having had it cast in his teeth that he, the denouncer of pluralities, was himself a pluralist in holding the two charges of rector and archdeacon—he felt at last compelled to inform the bishop that he must resign either the archdeaconry or the living, whichever the bishop pleased; he could not perform the duties of both. The bishop's reply was that the two offices must go together, the income of the living was required to support the archdeaconry; they had always been united, and must continue to be so.† Tunstall, admiring his nephew's honesty as much as he did, still could not quite rise to the level of his conscientiousness, and rebuked him for being so very scrupulous. "Have I not often told you," he said, "that you will die a beggar?"

As he could not hold either of the appointments alone, it appears probable that Gilpin resigned both, ‡

* Gilpin's *Life of Gilpin*, p. 113.

† They had in fact been united since the year 1255. Hutchinson, ii. 738.

‡ See beginning of next chapter as to Gilpin and these preferments, also Gilpin's *Life of Gilpin*, p 114.

and so now he was without any preferment, and apparently without any income. During the period ere he received another charge he resided with the bishop as one of his chaplains.

Thus Gilpin a second time had resigned a living on conscientious grounds, and a second time found himself reduced to a position of dependence.

While living with the bishop he was thrown much into the society of the other chaplains: of one of their discussions a very full account has come down to us. They were talking to him about Luther, probably with a view of drawing Gilpin out, and asked him what he thought of Luther and his writings? Gilpin replied that he "had not read them." His plan had been "first of all to search the Scriptures diligently, and to be acquainted with the expositions of the Fathers upon them. As for the writings of the neotericks, I have only looked upon them, howbeit I refuse them not when and where they agree with the auncients." One of the chaplains remarked that it would be well with the Church if all men would duly respect the writings of the Fathers, for then the upstart opinions of late writers would not so much disturb the Church, such as are these of Luther. "But," said Gilpin, "if neotericke and late writers produce the opinions of the auncient Fathers, the novelty of the men is not to be disdained, but the antiquity of the doctrine is to be reverenced." They then drew him on into a discussion "concerning the sacrament of the altar," as regards the real presence and transubstantiation, which gave Gilpin an opportunity of proving that there had been alterations in the faith of the Roman Church,

illustrating his point by quotations from Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas. "They stood at a stand, as having nothing to answer." Gilpin, observing them "to stagger at this point," drove it further home, drawing their attention to the Schoolmen's doctrine of concomitancy, concluding "these are the inventions of later men, whereas the Catholicke religion abhorreth invented alterations in matters of faith."—"While they were houlding this disputation without speakeing aloud, because they were close at the bishop's backe, who at that time sate before the fire, for it was in the winter season, the bishop leaned his chair somewhat backwards and harkened what was said. And when they had done speaking, the bishop, turning to his chaplaines, useth these words, 'Father's soule, let him alone, for he hath more learning than you all.'" *

This is a very interesting little picture, and is given on unquestionable authority, for George Carlton relates it as he had heard it from Anthony Carlton, "who at that time lived in the bishop's house."

Gilpin tells us that "he returned from Paris the more willingly" as hoping for reforms in matters in which, in Edward's reign, the Romish party "had promised a reformation, if ever the power came into their hands againe." But, alas! these promises were all forgotten when the opportunity came, or if reminded of them, as already stated, Gilpin's learned friends declared that changes could not safely be made, on the theory that if you once begin to repair there is no knowing when you will end. How discouraged Gilpin must have been. The Church needed a thorough

* Carlton, pp. 104–6.

purifying, but nothing was done but burning reformers under the name of heretics, and he himself was carrying his life in his hand.

The Queen might live for twenty years; she might very possibly be succeeded by Mary Stuart; and with no really representative government, and when so much depended on the personal views of the sovereign, unless the Church should reform herself, what was to be expected but that the last state should be worse than the first?

Cardinal Pole, if permitted, would have introduced some very important practical reforms. In 1556 he presided over the Convocation of both Houses in London, which drew up certain articles. These articles were published at Rome in 1562, and constitute a very valuable record of what a moderate and enlightened Roman Catholic was prepared to do to remove the abuses of his Church. For instance,—bishops and clergy were to reside on their charges, and pluralities to be forbidden;—all having charge of souls were strictly enjoined to be preachers, and rectors and vicars must also privately exhort and teach their flocks, and, if they could not preach, then homilies must be provided which they should read to the people;—great care was enjoined on bishops in examining candidates for orders, and in instituting to benefices;—Cathedral schools were to be established which should prove a sort of nursery for the clerical order, and excellent rules were also laid down to guide the bishops in their visitations of their dioceses, &c.;—all who had spiritual charges were ordered to gather together the children of their parishes every Sunday and holy day

at a certain hour to instruct them in the rudiments of the faith, and in piety and obedience to God and their parents;* &c. &c.

Such were some of Pole's recommendations. They struck at the abuses in practice which had been long denounced, and inasmuch as it is always practical faults which most attract attention, had Pole been able to carry out his reforms they might have gone far to establish Romanism, for a time at least, on a firm basis. But he was not supported by the clergy or by the courtiers of Queen Mary; Bishop Gardiner opposed him, and sent unfavourable reports of his proceedings to Rome accusing him of a leaning to Lutheranism; and Mary's end came too soon;—so that this method of undoing, by other means than fire and dungeons, the work of what Pole called the "Deformation," never went beyond the position of an able scheme.†

It will be observed that in Pole's proposals there is nothing said about reforms of doctrine. Whatever may have been his own views, that was not in his commission.

These proceedings of Pole and of Convocation must have been closely and eagerly watched by Gilpin, and would serve in some degree as a counterbalance to the wretched persecutions which were going on.

But every month the prospects grew more dark,

* "As it is in France and Italy, so it is also in this country, England, that the pastors of the churches have hitherto confined their duties chiefly to ceremonies, and have very rarely preached, and never catechised."—Letter of Martin Bucer from Lambeth, April 26, 1549: *Original Letters relative to the English Reformation*, ii. 535.

† *Reformatio Angliæ ex decretis Cardinalis Poli*, Rome, 1562, *passim*. Cf. Short's *History of the Church of England*, § 369.

and the hope of reform from within more visionary, and so earnest men like Gilpin were driven more and more from sight to faith.

There lingered in his heart still some faint traces of reverence for the Pope as the Head of the Church; and the experience of the Continent made him dread revolutionary measures, which indeed were alien from all his tendencies. But his regard for God's truth seemed ever to be pulling him in the opposite direction to that which all his ecclesiastical and inherited sympathies favoured.

Those latter days of Queen Mary were very sad ones for Gilpin; but doubtless it was part of the discipline of suffering by which he was being prepared for the great work which lay before him.

I do not know whether Gilpin shared these views, I am inclined to think he did not, but among the exiles abroad a strong persuasion prevailed that the triumph of Popery in England would not last long. Jewel was often repeating—"These things will not last an age," and Foxe the martyrologist, in a sermon at Basle, announced that the time was come for their return to England, and that he brought the welcome news by the command of God. Strange to say, Queen Mary had died on the day before this sermon was delivered.*

Every man's life is an education, and if a willing learner, he is led on step by step by the great Father and Leader through bright or dark days and experiences, every one of which is intended to and does supply some element that was lacking in his knowledge and capacity.

* Carwithen's *History of the Church of England*, i. 506.

Oxford,—Norton,—the Low Countries,—Paris,—Easington,—the Archdeaconry,—this retirement in the bishop's palace at Auckland,—and the anxieties of Mary's reign, each played their part. The Bernard Gilpin of Houghton and "of the north" would not have been the true earnest worker he was during his last thirty years had the contributions to his character and experience which each of those places and conditions afforded been withheld. God was leading him "by a path which he knew not."

CHAPTER VI.

APPOINTED TO HOUGHTON.

GILPIN did not long remain unbeneficed. The rectory of Houghton being vacant was offered to him by the bishop and accepted early in 1557.

There are some chronological and other difficulties connected with Gilpin's various appointments, which, however, do not present insuperable obstacles to a settlement.

In Bishop Tunstall's Register, preserved in the Diocesan Registry at Durham, his collation to Norton is dated April 1554, and that of his successor, May 6, 1556; and no mention whatever is made of his appointment to or resignation of Easington and the archdeaconry of Durham (with which the rectory of Easington was united); but in the list of archdeacons in Hutchinson's *History of Durham* (vol. ii. p. 285), it is said that he "succeeded to the archdeaconry of Durham in 1556, and quitted it in about four years," and in the list of rectors of Houghton, in the same work, he is stated to have become rector about October 29, 1558 (*Registro Barnes*, p. 2);* but neither is

* The date October 29, 1558, given for his collation to Houghton, curiously coincides with the time at which he must have received his summons from Bishop Bonner to come up to London just before the death of Queen Mary. She died November 17, 1558.

this appointment to Houghton to be found recorded in the Episcopal Registers. Where Hutchinson got it (and Surtees copied it from Hutchinson), it is impossible now to say: Barnes was not bishop until 1577, and there is obviously some error in the reference.

Our only safe guides in adjusting the chronology are the date of his presentation by Edward VI. to Norton, which was in November 1552, and that of his burial in the Houghton Register, namely, March 5, 158$\frac{3}{4}$. These are fixed points from which to work forward and backward, and it is easy to show that the dates in the Episcopal Registers given above are quite consistent with the results thus attained.

Appointed to Norton by the Crown in November 1552, he preached his sermon before Edward VI. on the first Sunday after Epiphany 1553; he then went to Norton, but in a very short time, say two or three months, resolved on going abroad for the satisfaction of his doubts. For some legal reason, probably connected with the mode of his appointment to the living, he could not formally resign, but he handed over the charge, with the whole income, to Robert Dalton his successor, who was then his neighbour at Billingham.

Edward VI. died in July 1553, and ere this took place Gilpin was already on the Continent, where the news reached him. He remained abroad about three years; this fixes his return to England in the first half year of 1556. On his return he probably made a formal resignation of Norton, to which he had been formally collated by the bishop in his absence on April 1, 1554,*

* This collation to Norton implies that the right of presentation was in the bishop, and was probably a formal act by Bishop Tunstall

and Dalton was then collated thereto. The date of his collation in the Episcopal Register, May 6, 1556, confirms the reckoning of the dates up to this point. Working backward from the date of his burial in the Houghton Register, viz., March 5, 158$\frac{3}{4}$, and where it is stated that he was "parson of Houghton-le-spring for the space of twenty-six years and forty-nine weeks," a computation which must be accepted as the result of careful and exact inquiries, this fixes his appointment to Houghton in March 1557. Possibly the actual collation may not have been made until October 1558, the date in the unknown document quoted by Hutchinson and Surtees. Thus working backward and forward from the two fixed dates, we find a space of nearly a year for his occupation of the rectory of Easington and the archdeaconry and his short retirement at Auckland, namely, from May 1556 to early in 1557.

The absence of any allusion to Easington and the archdeaconry, and to Houghton, in connection with Gilpin's name, in the Tunstall Register, is curious, but of course, as it does not affect the certainty of his appointment to Houghton, neither can it affect the certainty of that to Easington and the archdeaconry, both being established on independent grounds. The omission as regards the latter appointments is not, however, difficult to account for, as it is possible that his resignation followed so closely upon his appointment that the formal institution was omitted from the Register. As the note at the foot of the next page

to preserve his right, or, at all events, to show that he did not acquiesce in the right claimed by the Crown to appoint, and exercised in November 1552.

shows, Pilkington's Register implies Gilpin's tenure of both offices, namely Easington and the archdeaconry.

The tenure of the archdeaconry for about four years, which Hutchinson assigns to him, may only have been a conjecture, as no other incumbent thereof is named until Ebden in 1560.* Matters were very irregular in those days, and as there appears to have been no archdeacon appointed for a year before Gilpin's nomination, so possibly for three years after his resignation the office may have remained vacant. The period involved included the transition time from Queen Mary's reign to that of Elizabeth, and the Episcopal interregnum that followed Tunstall's deprivation, when everything would be very much out of joint. The words of his biographer Gilpin, in reference to his resignation of Easington and the archdeaconry, are as follows:—

"In consequence of the bishop's refusal to let him keep either the rectory of Easington or the archdeaconry singly, he most probably resigned them both; for I find him about this time without any office in the Church. During his being thus unemployed, he lived with the bishop as one of his chaplains."†

The following table represents the results of these reckonings:—

* In Bishop Pilkington's Register, p. 2, is recorded the institution of Ebden, who was Gilpin's successor in the rectory of Easington and the archdeaconry of Durham. These benefices are there stated to be then vacant by the resignation of Bernard Gilpin, the last incumbent. Ebden's institution is dated May 22, 1560, though for reasons which are given in the text, it is not probable that the institution followed immediately on Gilpin's resignation.

† Gilpin's *Life of Gilpin*, p. 114.

BERNARD GILPIN.

Vicar of Norton.—From November 1552 to March or April 1553.

On the Continent.—From early in 1553 to early in 1556.

Rector of Easington, and Archdeacon of Durham.—From May 1556 to early in 1557.

Rector of Houghton.—From March 1557 to March 158$\frac{3}{4}$.

The name of Bernard Gilpin will be always identified with the parish of Houghton-le-Spring, and constitutes its chief glory.

In Gilpin's time it was a huge parish extending east and west six or seven miles, and north and south seven or eight miles, and comprising sixteen villages or more. During recent years nearly a dozen new parishes have been formed out of the old parish, and Houghton is no longer so unwieldy as in days of yore, but it contains a much larger population within its present contracted limits than the whole large area did three centuries ago. In 1547 there were of "howsling people" in the whole parish 960,* representing say a population of between two and three thousand: by the last Census the population of the present parish was 5300.

Houghton is pleasantly situated in a hollow between Rainton Hill and the Warden Law ridge, and is sheltered on every side except the west; to the traveller approaching the village from almost any direction it has a very picturesque appearance, and the church tower embowered in trees is always a striking feature in the view. The old village lay principally to the east and south of the church, where the fine old Elizabethan mansion of Houghton Hall and the Market

* See Surtees Society Publications, vol. i. 1850, p. 71.

Square stand; but there are hardly any, if any, of the actual houses of Gilpin's Houghton in existence. The opening out of Houghton Pit has in recent times drawn the population more in a northerly and western direction, and it is here that the best streets and shops and buildings are now placed. Gilpin would be surprised if he could revisit the scene of his faithful labours once more, and view the shops, and Town Hall, and banks, and cemetery, and that noble cutting through the rock to the north—the work of the French prisoners in the old war times of Napoleon—which opens out the road to Sunderland.

As becomes the parish of Bernard Gilpin, Church work and educational work are zealously attended to at Houghton, and mission-rooms and churches and day and Sunday schools dot the parish in various directions.

The church is a fine cruciform building of various dates and styles, from the Norman architecture of the north side of the chancel, to that of the "Decorated" western window. It has been restored within the last thirty years, and galleries and wooden partitions and square pews, and other devices by which its ancient glories had been hidden out of sight, have been removed, so that now the church of St. Michael at Houghton-le-Spring is one of the handsomest ecclesiastical edifices in the diocese of Durham. It stands on a slight elevation above the road, in a spacious churchyard planted with trees, and the Grammar School and Alms-Houses form the eastern boundary of the churchyard.

Every pilgrim to Houghton naturally turns to the

rectory. It lies directly west of the church across the road, but considerably withdrawn from the highway in its own extensive grounds, and is approached through an old-fashioned gateway. But, alas! this is not the house which Gilpin occupied; one of his successors, George Davenport, rebuilt the rectory in the latter half of the seventeenth century, and what he left of the old buildings was subsequently removed by Rector Thurlow. There is probably little, if anything, remaining of the old house on which Gilpin expended so large a sum as £300 was in those days, and the only relic of him and his tenancy is an old thorn-tree at the back of the rectory, which goes by his name, and which is certainly as old as his time.* Houghton rectory is however a very pleasant spot, and quaint enough in appearance with its mullioned windows and battlements. It is surrounded by about seven acres of ground, which are charmingly laid out in gardens shrubberies and lawns; the old tithe barn is now St. Michael's School.

Before Gilpin's time Houghton had been shamefully neglected; his predecessor, William Frankleyn, was a pluralist (see chap. v. p. 83) and non-resident, and apparently the living had been vacant at least a year before Gilpin undertook the charge. The parishioners were sunk in ignorance, superstition and vice—it was an untilled garden overgrown with rank weeds. Grindal's description of the people of Yorkshire in 1570 would probably be a mild representation of

* Gilpin's house had suffered severely during the Civil Wars, and it was for this reason that Davenport took down the whole of it, and rebuilt it from the ground. Surtees, *History of Durham*, i. 157.

the condition of the parishioners of Houghton when Gilpin went amongst them—"Methinketh I see in them three evil qualities; which are great ignorance, much dulness to conceive better instructions, and great stiffness to retain their wonted errors."* Some of the salt of the earth were there, no doubt, but the mass of the population were as ignorant, as gross, as rough, and as superstitious as could well be imagined.

But Gilpin was not the man to quail before such a work as Houghton demanded. He had accepted the charge, and was determined, God helping him, that whatever industry and self-sacrifice and faith and prayer could do, should be done.

One great encouragement he soon enjoyed. As had been the case at Easington, so it was at Houghton; ere long the people proved eager to hear the Word of God, and came to the church in crowds and gave diligent ear to his ministrations. He spake as one with a message from God, and not as the teachers they had been used to; probably, indeed, they had hardly ever heard a sermon before, and when the Gospel came to them thus warm, as it were, from the living heart of a man such as their rector they could not choose but hear.

About eighty years before Gilpin's incumbency John Kelyng, then rector, had turned the rectory into a sort of fortress, and not without reason in those unsettled times and so near the Borders.† But when Gilpin took possession he found the buildings in almost

* *Remains of Archbishop Grindal*, p. 328. Parker Society.

† Hutchinson's *Durham*, ii. 691.

as dilapidated a condition as the parish, and much had to be done in repairs before even a few rooms could be made habitable. Non-residence was fatal to all sorts of parish buildings, the material as well as the spiritual; all went to wreck and ruin when the *persona ecclesiæ* was absent. While the necessary repairs were being carried out, Gilpin probably had to find a home elsewhere, for he was resolved to be a resident among his parishioners. It is just possible, though of course it is purely a supposition, that occasionally, while the works were being executed, he may have taken up his abode in the edifice which contains the present vestry of the church, built, as the architecture proves, at the latter part of the fifteenth century, and which has within recent years been tenanted by one of the curates of the parish. The building in question is situated in the south-east angle in the churchyard formed by the chancel and south transept. Apparently it was originally detached from the church, but the present rector has connected it thereto by a covered passage, and the lower room is used as a vestry. It is difficult to say what the original intention of this building was—some suppose it to have been a chantry or mortuary chapel, others an anchorite's dwelling; but there it is, a palpable house, with two floors and a fireplace upstairs as well as downstairs, and there it stood—whether thus furnished and arranged or not one cannot say—in Gilpin's time. And more improbable conjectures have been hazarded than this which I have ventured to make, that possibly Gilpin at least occasionally pitched his tent in these rooms while his "ark" at the rectory was "a preparing." This edifice,

for whatever purpose erected, would be in Gilpin's days comparatively new.

But leaving this conjecture to take its fate, it is certain that Gilpin not only put the dilapidated rectory into good repair when he entered on his incumbency, but subsequently greatly enlarged and improved it, spending on the house during his incumbency more than £300, a very large sum in those days, and making it a very commodious and extensive building; so that, as Bishop Carlton says, "his parsonage house seemed like a bishop's pallace, nor shall a man lightly finde one bishop's house amongst many worthy to be compared to this house of his, if he considers the variety of buildings, and neatnesse of the situation."

Gilpin had large ideas about his duties as steward of a great income, and rector of a wide parish like Houghton, and it was with benevolent intentions which he carried out subsequently that he spent so much on making his rectory so convenient and so roomy.

Bishop Tunstall seemed never to tire of heaping preferment on Gilpin, and when a canonry of Durham Cathedral fell vacant shortly after his appointment to Houghton was very anxious to confer it on him. I suppose there have been very few men either before or since his time who have declined a Durham canonry.

"I knew a priest," said Bishop Grindal in a sermon in St. Paul's Cathedral, "who had rapped together four or five benefices, but was resident upon never one of them. All this sufficed him not, and therefore he longed for a prebend also, there to spend at ease the milk and the fleece of the flocks he had never fed." Gilpin's conduct was a great contrast to that of

Grindal's priest; he would not have the canonry. In vain the bishop urged that "it was quite a sinecure," and there could be no reasonable objection against accepting it; Gilpin resolutely declined. He had already, he pleaded, more wealth than he was afraid he could give a good account of;* he begged therefore that he might have no additional charge, but that his lordship would rather bestow this preferment on one by whom it was more needed. It is very likely that the nepotism of Bishop Tunstall in promoting Gilpin so liberally and so rapidly had something to do with the ill feeling which was entertained towards him by his brethren of the clergy.

For their opposition had never relaxed; he had still to exercise the greatest caution, lest by word or deed he should give his clerical brethren a hold upon him, and lay himself open to a charge of heresy. In after life he often looked back upon the caution and reserve which he practised at this period, his first few years at Houghton, with shame and sorrow, as being a policy of time-serving and of weakness and cowardice.

No man in all the diocese was so closely watched as he; the lynx eyes of multitudes of unscrupulous men were upon him, and all he did or said was vigorously canvassed: at the same time, he had "all the country people favouring him." At last another series of articles was drawn up against him, and laid before the bishop. What the charges were we know not; but whatever they were, it is certain that he was acquitted again by Tunstall.

* The conduct of Rector Davenport under similar circumstances was very like Gilpin's. See the incident in Surtees, *History of Durham.*

The effect on the bishop, however, seems to have been to make him draw back somewhat from his favour to Gilpin,—no doubt the bishop himself would be to some extent sharing in the odium of his nephew,—and he struck him out of his will, that is, from the office of executor; this did not move Gilpin, "for losing the disposal of the bishop's goods, I thought I was well unburthened, and was glad thereof." But these charges also somewhat lost him the favour of "the plebeians and ordinary sort of people," which in his view was a much more important matter; but he observes, "as for the favour of the multitude, I hoped in time through the goodnesse of God to recover it againe, that my preaching might profit the more to edification; for otherwise I never desired the love of the vulgar."

These frequent attacks of his enemies were evidently doing him harm, you can't throw mud at a man without some at least sticking; but what grieved him most was not the bishop's coldness, nor the loss of his good name in itself, but the injury which was likely to result to the success of his preaching.

It seemed impossible now to make anything of the Bishop of Durham, so Gilpin's enemies felt, and if they were ever to achieve the condemnation of the rector of Houghton for heresy it must be through other hands than Tunstall's. They resolved therefore to try what could be done elsewhere. Accordingly, thirty-two articles were drawn up against Gilpin and laid before Bonner, Bishop of London. It must be understood that a General Commisson to discover and punish heresy had been granted to Bonner and to certain

other ecclesiastics and laymen in 1557; the justices and bishops in many cases, the Bishops of Durham, York, and Lincoln being of the number, having proved very lax and supine in the work of persecution. It was under this Commission, doubtless, that Gilpin's case was referred to Bonner.*

Bonner "took his pastime in blood like a leech," so people said, hence his nickname the "Burner;" but in spite of his willing prominence in the work of death, modern historical criticism has rehabilitated even Bonner, and we are told that "he seems to have been naturally a good-humoured and merciful man." † It is indeed singular how apparently cruel and heartless even gently-disposed men may become when the spirit of persecution has once been roused within them. Let Bonner, then, have the benefit of all that historical inquiry can do for him, but no more; perhaps it will not prove to be much.

Bonner was the right man for the emergency. Zealous with the zeal of the inquisitor, he extolled the laudable concern for religion which Gilpin's enemies were showing, and promised that the heretic should be at the stake in a fortnight.

Gilpin had friends in London, who having early intelligence of what was going on, sent him word to warn him of his danger, telling him that he had not a moment to lose if he would escape the fires.

He was not surprised at the news; he had long been

* Knight's *History of England*, iii. 90. Short's *History of the Church of England*, p. 222.

† Green's *Short History*, p. 358; but cf. Knight's *History of England*, iii. 86.

preparing himself to suffer for the truth, and he was now resolved not to make his escape. It would, he thought, be like denying his faith if he was backward in bearing testimony to his belief even unto death, and by this time he had evidently renounced all his hopes of a reform from within the Church: he could do no good by living, by dying he might be useful. One can imagine that Gilpin heard with something almost amounting to envy of the good confession witnessed by Taylor, Hooper, Latimer, Ridley and others, and felt as if his own position was so much lower than theirs, so unworthy, in fact, of the light and knowledge which God had blessed him with. He believed that if it was God's will that he should not suffer, He knew a way to deliver him out of the hand of the enemy; but, however this might be, he felt that it was a case in which he himself must be bold and unhesitating, that the time and occasion for reserve and silence were past, and that, if God pleased, he could not better aid the cause of religion than by his death. He had long lived very near to God, his heart was in a great measure weaned from the world; he was daily more convinced of its vanity, and more confirmed in the resolution to consider it merely as a state preparatory to eternity.

He received the news therefore with marvellous composure, and immediately called up William Airay, a favourite servant and a relation, his half-sister's son, who had long served him as his almoner and steward, and laying his hand upon his shoulder, said, "At length they have prevailed against me. I am accused to the Bishop of London, from whom there will be no escap-

ing; God forgive their malice, and grant me strength to undergo the trial." He then requested Airay to provide a long garment for him, "not for his winding, but for his burning sheet," as Fuller says, in which he might go decently to the stake, and desired it might be got ready with all speed, "for I know not," he said, "how soon I may have occasion for it." As soon as this garment was provided, it is said that he used to put it on every day till the messengers from Bishop Bonner arrived to apprehend him.

Of course his friends were meanwhile pressing him to make his escape to some place of safety. But he begged them not to urge this upon him. Did he attempt to escape, it would probably be impossible, as there could be little doubt but that all his movements were watched. Besides, he would ask, "how they could imagine he would prefer the miserable life of an exile before the joyful death of a martyr?" "Be assured," said he, "I should never have thrown myself voluntarily into the hands of my enemies; but I am fully resolved to persevere in doing my duty, and shall take no measures to avoid them."

If there is any certainty in the date given for his collation to Houghton, October 29, 1558 (*e Registro Barnes*), it is just possible that the legal step may have been taken with some reference to this citation to appear before Bonner and his Commission; as, if the date be correct, it refers to the exact period of this summons. Queen Mary died on November 17, 1558. If correct, it may have been a step taken to satisfy his friends, who might hope that if he had a legal position,

which this date assumes he had not previously, Bonner would not be able to touch him.

Not many days elapsed before the officers arrived to apprehend him, and so an end was put to the solicitations of his friends.

The story goes that on his way to London he broke his leg, and thus his journey was necessarily for some time delayed. The officers in whose custody he was, took occasion by this accident to retort upon him an observation he was frequently making, "that nothing happens to us but what is intended for our good;" asking him "whether he thought his broken leg was so intended?" He answered meekly, "He made no question but it was;" and, indeed, so it proved in the strictest sense, for before he was able to travel Queen Mary died, and he was set at liberty.

It is curious that although Carlton relates the circumstances above given as far as regards the journey with the messengers of Bonner, and the "sodaine death of Queen Mary freeing him from this danger," yet he makes no allusion whatever to the broken leg and its connection with his escape. Our authority for this is Gilpin's *Life of Gilpin*, and he gives it with a certain amount of reserve.*

It is unquestionable then that he was on his way to London to answer before Bishop Bonner on a charge of heresy when the news of the Queen's death met him on the road, and put a stop to the prosecution. The incident of the broken leg is not so certain, but it is in no degree improbable, and bears on its face all the evidences of being a fact and not a fable. We shall

* Gilpin's *Life of Gilpin*, p. 124.

not err much, I think, if at all, if we accept this beautiful little anecdote; it agrees with what we know of the man, it is embellished with no impossible accessories, it was not likely to have been invented, it is probably true.

While recalling this incident in Gilpin's life, we can hardly help recalling another prisoner's journey to London which was checked on the road, that of Cardinal Wolsey, when he was being conducted to London on a charge of high treason and fell ill at Leicester. Wolsey died there with these last words on his lips, surely the saddest ever uttered at such a time: "Had I but served God as diligently as I have served the King, He would not have given me over in my grey hairs." Gilpin, on the other hand, recovered to return to his living, and carry out more completely than ever that service of God which was dear to his heart.

Thus delivered from his foes, Gilpin returned to Houghton, to be welcomed home by crowds of his people expressing the utmost joy, and thanking God for his deliverance.

I have purposely said next to nothing here about his work when at Houghton, reserving all this for the following chapters, when, the burden of Queen Mary's reactionary reign being removed, Gilpin, for the first time almost in his life, found himself able to utter all that was in his heart and under no obligation to hold back anything.

In after years it must have been a great satisfaction to Gilpin, recalling what he felt was very like cowardice in his past history, to remember also that when it came to a great crisis, and his life was in jeopardy,

he had been enabled with singular courage to bear testimony to the truth, and to convince the world that not even life was so dear to him as the truth of the Gospel.

It is as rector of Houghton that Gilpin won his great fame; there he distinguished himself as the model parish priest, and, starting from thence, he carried out those missionary expeditions which made his name famous in his own days in Northumberland and Durham, and other northern countries, and earned for him the title of the "Northern Apostle," or the "Apostle of the North." Here too he became so celebrated for his liberality in almsgiving that he won for himself another honourable name, that of "the common father of the poor."

But, as we have seen, up to the date of Mary's death he was in an eminently unsafe not to say painful position. With Elizabeth's accession a new era dawned for him, as for multitudes of others; he was unmuzzled, unshackled, he began to feel himself in his proper place, his conscientious difficulties were removed, and he was henceforth more free than he had ever been before to throw himself into the great work for which he was so well fitted.

Not that all his troubles were at an end, or that henceforth every man was his friend. Strange as it may seem, the changes introduced by Queen Elizabeth made almost no change in the *personnel* of the clergy, nearly all of whom conformed to the new order of things, and so of course Gilpin's old enemies were there still. But their teeth were drawn; Gilpin's friends were now in power, theirs "in the cold shade."

He might now bid defiance to their ill-feelings, they could do him no real harm.

Henceforth he devoted himself with unfettered energies and zeal to his duties, and nearly all the apostolic work which has made him famous lies between the year 1558, when Elizabeth ascended the throne, and 1584—when, his long, useful, and laborious career ended, he was laid in his grave at Houghton.

CHAPTER VII.

QUEEN ELIZABETH AND THE REFORM.

QUEEN ELIZABETH was not a woman of any deep religious convictions, but such feelings as she had on the point were favourable to a moderate reform in the direction taken by her brother Edward VI. When she came to the throne she found everything out of gear in the Church;—what could be expected after the rapid and radical changes of Edward and Mary? In some dioceses more than half the parishes were without any pastors, the churches were falling into ruin, and what religion the clergy possessed was, as a rule, Romish; while the great majority of the people were still of the old faith.

"My sweet sister Temperance," Edward VI. used to call her. She had been nursed in the school of caution, and for years one word or deed of indiscretion might have cost her her head; moreover, her natural tendency was in the direction of what may be called "prudent management." Accordingly, she moved slowly and warily in all the steps she took in regard to religion, while there could be no mistake as to her intentions; the path was made easier for her by the horror with which the nation had been struck at the blood-and-

fire policy of the last reign, and which was identified necessarily with the Romish tenets.

The recall of the exiles and the liberation of prisoners for religion were among her first measures; then a gradual recurrence ensued to the service-books of Edward VI., somewhat altered in the direction of checking extreme views; "*ne quid nimis*" was a strong feature in Elizabeth's character and policy. Then followed the re-enactment of the Royal Supremacy, the repeal of the statutes against heresy, and the dissolution of the monasteries which Mary had refounded.

The bishops appointed by Queen Mary foresaw what was coming; and to a man, with one exception, that of the Bishop of Llandaff,* refused to accept the supremacy, and were deprived and sent to prison. But, as already noticed, nearly all the parochial clergy, all, in fact, except about eighty, conformed; while to the mass of the nation, the cautious measures of Elizabeth seem to have been fairly acceptable. No marked repugnance was shown to the new worship in general by the people, and England was quietly passing without much friction,—no "pilgrimage of grace," no revolts, no bloodshed,—into the better day.

It is quite possible that Romanism would have

* To wit, "Anthony Kitchen, *alias* Dunstan. Camden calls him '*sedis suæ calamitatem*,' the bane of his bishopric, wasting the lands thereof, by letting long leases; as if it were given to binominous bishops (such as had two names) to be the impairers of their Churches; as may appear by these four contemporaries in the reign of Henry VIII. John Capan, *alias* Salcot, spoiled Salisbury; John Voisey, *alias* Harman, spoiled Exeter; Robert Parfeu, *alias* Warton, spoiled St. Asaph; Anthony Kitchen, *alias* Dunstan, spoiled Llandaff."—Fuller's *Church History*, ix. xvi. 22, 23.

almost died out, but for an order issued from Rome forbidding the presence of Roman Catholics at the new worship. This was in 1562. This order was to some extent obeyed, and was the signal for measures of retaliation of a despotic nature in the shape of heavy fines for recusancy, and which became a source of considerable revenue to the Royal Exchequer.

But by no means was it obeyed universally, and even for ten years after, the principal persons of the Romish communion attended the services of the Church of England without scruple or dissatisfaction. What terminated this conformity was the bull of excommunication launched by the Pope against the Queen, "and the heretics adhering unto her," and by which "her subjects are declared absolved from the oath of allegiance and every other thing due unto her whatsoever; and those who from henceforth obey her, are innodated with the anathema." This excommunication was dated "the 5th Kalends of March 1569," and marks the final breach with Rome, and put a stop to the communion which, to a large extent, had existed up to that time.*

Meanwhile in the diocese of Durham, if Gilpin found himself freed from his old restraints and able to defy his enemies, he suffered a loss in the removal of his great-uncle Bishop Tunstall, who had refused the oath of supremacy and was in consequence deprived. Bishop Pilkington succeeded Tunstall in 1561 after an interregnum of more than two years.

* See Fuller's *Church History*, ii. 559, ix. xvi. 24; Carwithen's *History of the Church of England*, ii. 37; and Ross Lewin's *Continuity of the English Church*, p. 35.

In the Parliament of 1559 an Act was passed authorising a visitation of all the dioceses of England by commissioners, for rectifying all such things as might be found amiss in the various parishes, and for tendering the oath of supremacy to the clergy and obtaining their subscription to certain articles.*

When the commissioners came to Auckland, one of them, Dr. Sandys, sent for Gilpin and appointed him a time and place to preach against the Pope's supremacy. The choice of Gilpin for this office of preacher, and the topic assigned to him, are evidences of the esteem in which he was held, of the assumed soundness of his views, and of the special teaching which the Durham clergy were understood to need.

To this task Gilpin made no objection. But he was much shocked when on the previous day Dr. Sandys, in the course of his sermon, "seemed utterly to deny a reall presence." This so "wounded my tender conscience," he writes, "that the night following I could not sleep at all, and was much troubled in my minde whether I should preach the next day or not." This was the man who has been supposed to care little or nothing about doctrine; evidently where he was convinced that a doctrine was Scriptural few men cared more than he. "At the last," he tells us, "I went almost out of my bed into the pulpit; where, I know not how it happened, whether it was through my disquiet of conscience, or want of sleep, or in that I had offended God to goe up against my conscience,

* For the Commission and articles see Burnet's *History of the Reformation*, ii. 350, 365. See also Short's *History of the Church of England*, p. 232.

but methought I did never feel such a want of utterance; and yet in my judgement I had provided matter enough, and waighty reasons." *

But now was to follow the subscribing of articles. This was on the next day. Gilpin was ever "sollicitous and wary either in subscriptions or oaths not to be caught in a trap;" † they are his own words. He was of opinion that it should be enough that "men were satisfied in the Scriptures and the articles of the faith," that is, the creeds, "in other things as they are agreeable to Scripture." In the present instance so it was that "in a point or two of the articles my conscience did not appear to me so well resolved as I could wish," so that he would gladly have escaped signing. It was modest in him to suppose as he did that under cover of the signature of his curate (who he had some reason for believing would make no difficulty about the subscription) he himself might escape being called; but to Gilpin's surprise his curate "withdrew himselfe as unwilling to subscribe," and to his further surprise Gilpin himself was called upon first of the assembled clergy to append his name, no doubt as a mark of respect, and because of the effect which his signature would produce upon the others.

Here was a great emergency, and next to no time for reflection and for balancing reason; but these thoughts occurred to him "straightwayes,"—"My greatest confidence is reposed in this religion, because it giveth glory to God and authority to the Word of God for

* Carlton's *Life of Gilpin*, in Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Biography*, v. 131.

† Carlton, p. 133.

the rooting out of superstition and humane doctrines. Onely mine heart doubted in certaine points of smaller consequence, which God, as I hope, shall in time reveale unto me. If I shall refuse, I shall be a meanes to make many others refuse, and so consequently hinder the course of the Word of God." Therefore he subscribed. The following evening he sent to Dr. Sandys his protest regarding the two points on which he had some doubts,*—the doctor was not in any degree offended at this, but accepted it very courteously.

Influenced by the example of his Rector the curate also subscribed, and it is said fell sick the next day: "And whiles I was gone along with the visitors to Kendal and Lancaster, he dyed before my returne, having not been sicke a whole weeke. Some supposed," Gilpin continues, "that subscription killed his heart; others said his infirmity proceeded from excessive drinking: God onely knoweth what was the cause of his death." Without being excessively uncharitable, I am afraid we must infer that the curate possessed neither so tender a conscience nor so well ordered a life as his Rector, whose simplicity and charity in this little narrative we cannot help admiring.

From a commission dated October 8, 1559, it appears that Gilpin himself was at that date nominated a commissioner with Roger Watson to visit the diocese of Durham for the reformation of abuses—this refers probably to a little later date than the first commission before which he was cited himself. It appears above,

* We are not told what these two points were. The articles are printed in full in Burnet's *History of the Reformation*, vol. ii. p. 365, No. II.

also, that he accompanied the visitors to Kendal and Lancaster, as Jewel had been sent as visitor to his own native western counties, probably because it was hoped that Gilpin's name and fame would be useful in Westmoreland and Lancashire.*

If the uncle was deprived of a Bishopric it was not long ere the nephew was urged to accept one. Amid the appointments to vacancies soon after the Queen's accession in the year 1560, the Earl of Bedford, long an admirer of Gilpin, used his influence to obtain the see of Carlisle for him; and inasmuch as Gilpin was a north-countryman, and, better still, a west-countryman, the Queen nominated him to the vacant see.

Gilpin could not be persuaded to accept the appointment. He was deeply obliged to the Queen and to the Earl, but he must decline; it was a position which he did not deserve and to which he knew himself unequal. Further pressure was used. Gilpin had written to the above effect to Lord Bedford, who sent on his letter to Dr. Sandys, Bishop of Worcester, with a request that he would use his persuasions to induce Gilpin to change his mind; Sandys was a friend and relative of Gilpin's, and had also spoken in his behalf to the Queen in regard to the bishopric. The following is the letter which Bishop Sandys accordingly wrote:—

"My much and worthily respected coozen, having regard unto the good of the Church of Christ, rather then to your ease, I have by all the good meanes I could beene carefull to have this charge imposed upon you, which may

* *Jewel's Life*, in Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Biography*, iv. 41.

both be an honour to your selfe, and a benefit to the Church of Christ. My true report concerning you hath so prevailed with the Queenes Majesty, that she hath nominated you Bishop of Carlile.

"I am not ignorant that your inclination rather delighteth in the peaceable tranquility of a private life. But if you looke upon the estate of the Church of England with a respective eye, you cannot with a good conscience refuse this charge imposed upon you: so much the lesse, because it is in such a place, as wherein no man is found fitter then your selfe to deserve well of the Church. In which respect I charge you before God, and as you shall answer to God herein, that setting all excuses aside, you refuse not to assist your country, and to doe service to the Church of God to the uttermost of your power. In the meane while I give you to understand that the said bishoprick is to be left unto you untouched, neither shall any thing of it be diminished (as in some others it is a custome) but you shall receive the bishopricke entire as Doctor Oglethorpe hath left it. Wherefore exhorting and charging you to be obedient to Gods call herein, and not to neglect the duty of your owne calling, I commend both yourselfe and the whole businesse to the divine providence. In hast, At London, the fourth day of April, 1560.

Your kinsman and brother,

EDWIN WORCESTER."

But Gilpin was not to be moved from his resolution, he must decline the bishopric. Many blamed him for this, many only respected him the more.

Subsequently Bishop Carlton tells us how he heard Gilpin on one occasion when he was asked on what grounds he had so resolutely refused the bishopric, reply that "he refused not so much the bishopricke as the inconvenience of the place, for," he said, "if I had

beene chosen in this kinde to any bishopricke elsewhere, I would not have refused it; but in that place I have beene willing to avoide the trouble of it, seeing I had there manie of my freinds and kindred, at whom I must connive in many thinges, not without hurte to myselfe, or else deny them manie thinges, not without offence to them; which difficulties I have easily avoided by the refusall of that bishopricke." *

Various incorrect reasons have been alleged why Gilpin refused Carlisle: it is said that he shrank from encountering the Popery of both priests and people in that diocese, but he had the same sort of thing to face at Houghton or anywhere else in the north. The following extracts from letters of Bishop Grindal, suggest some of the difficulties which any Bishop of Carlisle must encounter:—"I pray you be good to my Lord of Carlisle the bringer. There be marvellous practices to deface him in my lawless country,"—Grindal was a native of St. Bees. In a subsequent letter, dated December 27, 1563, in which he begs Sir W. Cecil to appoint a Mr. Scot to a vacant prebendary at Carlisle, Grindal says: "The Bishop of Carlisle hath often complained to me for want of preachers in his diocese. All his prebendaries are ignorant priests or old, unlearned monks. I know the nature of my countrymen. I believe horseflesh hath not been spared for prevention, but if it may be stayed for this man, I believe he shall do the most good." Strype says, "Best, Bishop of Carlisle, had met with very ill dealings in that country, replenished with papists and such like; which perhaps was the cause that Bernard Gilpin pru-

* Carlton, p. 113.

dently declined the bishoprick." * These things prove that the Bishopric of Carlisle could be no bed of roses, and would not suit an indolent or half-hearted man; but then Gilpin was neither the one nor the other.

It has also been stated that he knew what he was about in refusing to leave Houghton for Carlisle, as the exchange would have made him a much poorer man; but this is extremely questionable, as he was offered the bishopric with all the old temporalities undiminished, and Gilpin, who always deemed his income only as a fund for the common good, was not inclined to set wealth before usefulness.

His own explanation is a very probable one in itself, and coming from him none that understand his character will hesitate about accepting it. He had no radical objection to becoming a bishop, but if he was a bishop it must be where he could exercise his office successfully. He would not consent to be a dumb dog, and having onee tasted the sweets of liberty and felt its power could never go anywhere, or take any office, where he would be tongue-tied or hand-tied, as he might prove to be through his extensive family connections in Carlisle diocese. But a resolute "nolo episcopari" is such an uncommon phenomenon, that people tax their ingenuity for reasons which are consonant with the promptings of a low range of views, and discover such as are not always very charitable.

It is an interesting coincidence and worth recalling here, that after the Restoration a collateral descendant of Gilpin, and of the same surname, his great-nephew, Mr. Richard Gilpin, Rector of Graystock, was offered

* See Grindal's *Remains*, Parker Society, pp. 268, 285.

the same bishopric of Carlisle and declined it; his reason, however, was his "conscientious scruples as to the Act of Uniformity, which seemed to him to outrage the truth and ignore conscience." *

Calamy, in his *Ejected Ministers,* speaking of Richard Gilpin's refusal of the bishopric, describes his conduct and that of Bernard Gilpin as "consonant to their motto, *dictis factisque simplex.*"

In the following year, 1561, another offer was made to Gilpin. There had been much difficulty in appointing a Provost at Queen's College, Oxford,—Gilpin's original college, and of which he had been a Fellow prior to his removal to Christ Church. The Fellows were much given to Romanism and would have chosen a man of their own way of thinking; but this was quite inconsistent with the policy of the Queen, who insisted on the election of a certain Dr. Francis. Much against their will the Fellows elected Francis, but soon made the place so unpleasant for him that he wished to resign. In this emergency he thought of Gilpin as a man likely to be acceptable to the Fellows, and wrote to him asking him whether he would take the provostship if he (Francis) resigned in his favour. We can see many reasons why Gilpin's reply to this offer should be a negative as it was. Queen's was hardly likely to be to him a much more pleasant post than it had proved to Francis. There was little prospect of his being able to make much change in the views of the Fellows, specially when filling a post which they desired to see

* Grosart's *Life of Richard Gilpin,* prefixed to the reprint of the *Dæmonologia Sacra.* Surtees Society, *Life of Ambrose Barnes,* p. 392. Calamy's *Ejected Ministers,* ii. 157.

occupied by one of their own views, and he had valuable work for God in hand at Houghton and in the North, work which was opening out more and more, and for which he was discovering in himself a peculiar aptitude. Francis had asked him to recommend some one else, should he be unable to accept the appointment himself: "I shall want your advice upon whom I may confer the same," he wrote, but there is no information as to whether Gilpin did recommend any one.

Norton, Easington, and the Archdeaconry resigned, and Canonry, Bishopric, Provostship, all in turn refused, there was no place for him so suitable as Houghton, none where he could be so happy or so useful, none which had an equal claim upon him, and nothing could tempt him away. Henceforth the names of Bernard Gilpin and Houghton were to be inseparably connected, and as Rector of Houghton he was to do a work which should make him and the parish celebrated through after ages.

The Rector of Houghton had had strange experiences. Honest to the back-bone, no one had been so often and so long an object of suspicion, and few can have found themselves so drifted into positions in which it was most difficult to be open and straightforward.

He had been a beneficed clergyman under both Edward VI. and Queen Mary, and had resigned livings and appointments, in either reign, of his own accord and at the voice of conscience. He had been a foremost defender of Romish doctrine in Edward's reign, and in Mary's had been over and over again charged with heresy. He had returned to England in

the delusive hope that the Church of Rome, at least in England, might reform herself; and ere three years had elapsed had found, in the death of Mary and the accession of Elizabeth, a deliverance from martyrdom and the opportunity of speaking freely.

The times had ever been changing around him, and he had been changing too; but always in the direction of more truth and light. Brought up in the strictest Romanism, slowly but surely he found his way into the sound doctrine of the Church of England.

And the secret of all his change was in his reverence for Scripture, and for Christ whom Scripture reveals. These influences guided him when, in the discussion with Peter Martyr, he began to feel that the foundations were giving way,—gave him a message to the parishioners of Norton as to King Edward VI.,—sent him abroad for three years to get his views settled,—made him a faithful priest at Easington, and a good Archdeacon, and at the same time roused the bitter anger and opposition of the Durham clergy,—gave him a mouth and wisdom when he was appointed to Houghton;—and gradually emancipated him from the fetters of the old Roman doctrine, until on Elizabeth's accession he stood up a free man, and fully persuaded in his own mind was able to utter all that was in his heart.

When Queen Elizabeth ascended the throne in 1558 Gilpin was forty-one years of age, and for more than half her long reign he remained at his post in that wide parish, doing a great work for God, making himself the father of his people, and establishing the Church of England in the affection and reverence of

the North country. The mental and spiritual troubles he had gone through had nerved and strengthened him to be a leader of men, and the after part of his life would probably not have been possible without the painful training of the former.

CHAPTER VIII.

RESOLVED TO DO HIS DUTY.

GILPIN went to Houghton with the honest resolve that, God helping him, he would do his duty by the parish. His presence there meant, according to his interpretation, that he was to be the friend, guide, helper of his people in things spiritual and temporal. As shepherd of the flock he regarded all his possessions as held in trust for their good; the poor, the weak, the afflicted had, as such, double and treble claims upon him, but there was not a person in Houghton, high or low, who might not command his services—nor, as we shall see later on, did he forget the regions beyond.

As already observed, he found superstition and ignorance on all sides, and against these, as the devil's stronghold, he waged relentless war. His work was really that of a missionary; anything like true religion was hardly known, and it was needful to build almost from the foundation. On every side vice and greed and covetousness and the grosser sins abounded, and in many cases the very elements of right and wrong had to be inculcated.

He had not been long in the parish ere, touched

with the wise prevision of the times, which saw in the better education of the rising generation and especially in the provision of an educated clergy, the most profitable measures for advancing God's work, he set his heart on establishing a grammar school—it was the age of grammar schools—and he determined that Houghton should have a good school or he would know the reason why. This purpose ever stood in the very front place among his benevolent schemes. But more of the grammar school further on.

A taunt which is not always undeserved could never be applied to Gilpin, that he was so busy saving souls that he forgot that he was dealing with men and women; he never lost sight of the man in the saint, nor of the saint, or possible saint, in the man. His sympathies with the parishioners of Houghton were many-sided, he was at their service with the whole-hearted devotion of a genuine Christian man.

Without the affection and confidence of his people he knew himself to be powerless for God's work there, hence one of his first objects was to win his way to their heads and hearts. To succeed in this, however, as one of his biographers says, "he used no servile appliances, he would have his means good as well as his ends. His behaviour was ever free from levity, obliging without meanness, insinuating without art; he condescended to the weak, bore with the passionate, complied with the scrupulous; in a truly apostolic manner he became "all things to all men." Thus he won golden opinions from his neighbours and convinced them how heartily he was their friend.

Speaking from the deep resources of his own ex-

perience, and drawing on his extensive scriptural knowledge, he was always popular and effective as a preacher: he spoke as "a dying man to dying men," and his holy, temperate, and grave bearing in daily life lent force to these public exhortations.

But Gilpin was not contented with public addresses alone, he was much in conversation and private communion with his people, and encouraged them to come to him in all their griefs and difficulties, and indeed the ablest preaching without this personal and private dealing with souls can produce very little fruit; the awakened and anxious want some personal assurance that the message is for them; they need a human encounter, nay, a living hand to grasp theirs, in order to be assured that God's love and redemption are actually for them. As George Herbert says, "Every one is more awakened when we come and say 'thou art the man.'"

Having only the fear of God before his eyes, Gilpin could reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all authority, and at the same time with all meekness and gentleness; but if he never shrank from rebuking sin and wrong-doing, neither did he ever forget to encourage the penitent and well disposed—thus acting the part of the true parish priest, and gradually convincing all men of the justice of his standards and the purity of his motives, and of the reality of his affectionate interest in their best welfare.

Every man in Houghton learnt ere long to regard his Rector as a friend; every man, yes, and every woman and child knew that at the Rectory, and in the person of a distinguished scholar and a man of great

reputation, they had a real pastor and a brother who would do anything possible for any of them.

Under a Rector like this a change came over the parish of Houghton, and virtue and godliness began to assert themselves where hitherto such divine things were scarcely known.

Herbert describes his "Country Parson" as not enduring "that any of his flock should go to law," but desiring that "in any controversy they should resort to him as their judge." * Gilpin's policy was similar, he detested law-suits, and took great pains to prevent such among his people by encouraging them to come to himself in their disputes; thus his hall was often crowded with persons wanting his advice, and although no lawyer he could give them equity, which in most cases served their turn quite as well.

Wherever affliction came there he felt that God was surely in that place, and that His minister should least of all be absent. He knew God's purposes of mercy in such seasons, and how open the heart is then to good impressions, and he came to the bereaved and sorrowful and anxious as an angel of light. When he was too old to do much in this department of his work he would write letters of consolation and spiritual advice. Here is such a letter written within a year of his own death.

"After my most due commendations, I beseech you, gentle Mrs. Carr, diligently to call to mind how mercifully God hath dealt with you in many respects. He hath given you a gentleman of worship to be your husband; one that I know loveth you dearly, as a Christian man should love

* Herbert's *Country Parson*, chapter xxiii.

his wife. And by him God hath blessed you with a goodly family of children, which both you and your husband must take to be the favourable and free gift of God.—But, good Mrs. Carr, you must understand, that both that gift of God, and all others, and we ourselves, are in his hands: he takes what he will, whom he will, and when he will; and whomsoever he taketh, in youth or in age, we must fully persuade ourselves, that he ordereth all things for the best. We may not murmur, or think much at any of his doings; but must learn to speak from our hearts the petition of the Lord's prayer, 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' It is unto this holy obedience that St. Peter calleth all Christians, saying, 'Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God.' —This godly submission did cause the holy patriarch Job, when it pleased God to take from him not only one, but all his children, seven brethren and sisters, upon one day, never to grieve himself with what God had done, but meekly to say, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.'—And here I would have you, good Mrs. Carr, to consider, how small cause you have to mourn, or fall into a deep sorrow, in comparison of the holy patriarch. God hath taken from you only one young daughter, and hath left you a goodly family of children, which, I trust, with good education, will prove a blessed comfort to you.—This example of Job, and other examples in Holy Scripture, being written, as the Apostle saith, for our admonition, I must needs declare you to be worthy of great blame, if you continue any space in such great sorrow and heaviness, as I hear you take for your young daughter. St. Peter saith, that Christ Jesus suffered for us most cruel torments, and last of all a most cruel death, 'to leave us an example, that all that believe in him should follow his blessed steps;' that is, to bear his cross, to be armed with all patience, whensoever we lose any thing that we love in this world. And the same Apostle saith, 'Seeing Christ

hath suffered for us in his body, all you that are Christians must be armed with the same thought.'—Furthermore the Scripture saith, that unto us it is given not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for his sake. And St. Paul, in the 8th to the Romans, hath a most comfortable sentence to all that will learn to suffer with him; and a most fearful sentence to all those that refuse to suffer with him, and to bear his cross: 'The Spirit,' saith he, 'beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and fellow-heirs with Christ;' it followeth, 'if so be that we suffer together with him, that we may also be glorified with him.' And St. Paul, in the first chapter of the second to the Corinthians, saith to all the faithful, 'As ye are companions of those things, which Christ hath suffered, so shall ye be companions of his consolations.'—All these things considered, I doubt not, good Mrs. Carr, but that you will arm yourself with patience, and bear Christ's cross, learning to suffer for his sake, and that, were it a greater loss than you have, God be praised, as yet sustained.—Let your faith overcome your sorrow. St. Paul, writing to the Thessalonians concerning the dead, (who, he saith, have but fallen asleep) forbiddeth them not to mourn, but utterly forbiddeth them to mourn like Gentiles and infidels who have no hope in Christ. And the wise man (Ecclus. xxii.) doth exhort us to mourn over the dead, so it be but for a little space: 'Weep,' saith he, 'for the dead, but only for a little time, because they are gone to their rest.' So you see there is an unreasonable mourning of them that want faith; and there is also a temperate and lawful mourning of them that have a steadfast belief in Christ and his promises, 'which,' St. John saith, 'overcometh all the temptations,' that is, the troubles, 'of the world.' I trust, verily, good Mrs. Carr, that your mourning being temperate will show itself to be a faithful, not a faithless mourning; which latter I pray Almighty God to keep

from you.—But I fear to be tedious. I trust one day I shall be able to come unto you myself. In the mean space, and evermore, I shall pray that the God of all consolation may comfort you in all your troubles. Your loving friend in Christ,

"BERNARD GILPIN.

"*Houghton, May* 31, 1583."

If the Rector could prevent it no one of his parishioners should be injured or oppressed—nor indeed any one else—and as he gradually obtained great authority, and was always known to mean what he said, he could generally succeed in his benevolent interventions.

This zeal against oppression and wrong-doing brought him, at one period of his life, into not unfrequent collision with a certain John Barnes, a brother of Bishop Barnes,* and Rector of Haughton-le-Skerne; Barnes seems to have had too much to do with the government of the diocese, and his influence on the Bishop was by no means salutary. Carlton and Gilpin, in their lives of Bernard Gilpin, describe John Barnes as Chancellor of Durham; and Hutchinson and Surtees, the historians of Durham, follow them in this statement, Surtees supposing him to have been not temporal but spiritual chancellor. But he never was chancellor at all.† That he had great influence over his brother, as stated above, and that he was supposed and known to be at the bottom of many objectionable practices and acts, there can be little

* On the bribe-taking officers of Bishop Barnes, see Hutchinson's *History of Durham*, i., p. 572.

† Surtees Society Volume for 1850, p. 88.

doubt. There is some evidence that he trafficked with the Bishop's patronage—he appears to have done so in the case of Houghton.

In a subsequent chapter I shall have something more to say about Gilpin's relations with John Barnes.

Thus Gilpin laid himself out for the good of his flock at Houghton. He was altogether at their service, and far from narrowing the limits of his responsibilities, he was ever finding some new duty to bestow on his people.

We may imagine how he found his work accumulating upon him in a large and widely-scattered parish like Houghton; there could be little leisure for the pastor who in so many ways was making himself the servant of his people.

Edward Irving wrote a long and appreciative preface to an edition of Gilpin's *Life of Bernard Gilpin*, which was published in 1824. He sums up as follows:—"Gilpin's ministerial character did not denude him of his natural sympathies with all mankind. Cheerfulness was in his soul because it was in good health; he saw his way through all the paths of life by the lamp of his conscience, which he kept well trimmed; he was the humblest of men, and found no satisfaction in his good works, but found his peace in the Lord Jesus Christ; in all things he kept by the model of Christ. Like his Master, he was as a sharp sword against the scribes and pharisees, hypocrites; a place of refuge to the naked and destitute, a shepherd to the flock, food to the hungry, and drink to the thirsty, who went about on continual errands of well-doing, and kept

constant communion with God, and constant humiliation of himself, and walked with God." *

Goldsmith's description of the "Village Preacher" is almost too hackneyed to quote, yet I may perhaps be forgiven if I cull a few lines here and there and string them together, lines which were never more applicable than to Gilpin. And indeed he may be said to have a sort of first claim to this eulogy as being, for the Church of England since the Reformation, the prototype of the parish priest; the man of all others in his day who conspicuously illustrated the true position and work of the minister of God, and whose example the succeeding generations of faithful pastors have more or less consciously followed:—

A man he was to all the country dear;
Remote from towns he ran his godly race;
Nor ere had changed, nor wished to change his place.
Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for power;
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,
More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.
And in his duty prompt to every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all;
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.
Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismayed,
The reverend champion stood. At his control,
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whispered praise.
At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.

* Preface to Gilpin's *Life of Bernard Gilpin*, pp. liii., liv.

The service past, around the pious man,
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran;
Even children followed with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown to catch the good man's smile;
His ready smile a parent's warmth expressed,
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distressed;
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.

The hospitality and charities of Gilpin were unbounded; his money and means were at the service of all who needed them. Every week on the Thursday he ordered that a "very great pot should be provided full of boiled meat for the poore" (Carlton, p. 108). Twenty-four of the poorest of his people were his constant pensioners. Every Sunday from Michaelmas to Easter he kept open house for all his parishioners; for their entertainment three long tables were provided, one for the gentry, a second for farmers, a third for labourers. This he never omitted, even when it could only be maintained with the greatest difficulty; present or absent himself, the Sunday dinner was always there for who would partake of it. For many years he boarded and lodged from twenty to twenty-four of the pupils of the Grammar School in the Rectory, most of them free of charge. Then Houghton Rectory was the resort of strangers from a distance, and of friends who eagerly gathered round the enlightened and hospitable Rector. The fortnightly consumption in his household was forty bushels of corn, twenty of malt,* and a

* At Dilston Hall, in 1681, 975 bushels of malt were used in nine months, but here there was an establishment of thirty-three servants. Incredible as it may seem, the monks of the Abbey of Sallay, in Craven, annually brewed 2040 bushels of malt. Their whole establishment numbered seventy persons, so that, supposing each quarter produced

whole ox, besides a proportional quantity of other provisions. So well was the hospitality of Houghton Rectory known, that it used to be said that if a horse had anywhere strayed, it would be sure to find its way to the Rectory stables.

In considering these facts, we must remember that during Gilpin's incumbency of Houghton, the poor were feeling the pinch occasioned by the abolition of the monasteries, which, whatever else they might be, were generous-handed institutions for the poor, and that the Poor Laws had not yet supplied the deficiency; hence there was great need of charity like Gilpin's. In 1562 an Act was passed providing that voluntary contributions for the poor failing, the justices were enabled to assess a rate on all persons who refused to contribute according to their ability. But the enforcement of such an Act was a very invidious process, and it could not meet the necessities of the case. The Poor Law which amended previous laws, and which remained in force until a time within the recollection of living men, was not passed until 1601, seventeen years after Gilpin's death. In Gilpin's time the relief of pauperism mainly depended upon voluntary charity.*

At home and abroad the Rector of Houghton was distinguished for generous liberality and unstinted but

60 gallons of beer—it might be from that to 100 gallons—the quantity for each person would be nearly 300 gallons per annum, but hospitality and charity must be taken into account, and it should be remembered that tea, coffee and cocoa, &c., were then unknown. (See Gibson's *Dilston Hall*, p. 24.) On the same scale per quarter of malt, Gilpin's household consumed 150 gallons of beer per fortnight. The cost per gallon of beer in 1550, according to Holinshed, was about 1¼d.

* See Green's *Short History of the English People*, p. 385.

careful charity. Wherever he heard of any case of distress he never rested until he had given relief; if he met poor people on the road he would bring them home, and feed, and, if necessary, clothe them; if he could not bring them home he would give them the last penny in his pocket, and if need be take off his own coat and give it. He was best pleased when his charity could be an encouragement to industry. Nothing gave him so much delight as to make up the losses of his poor neighbours and prevent them from sinking under the burden. One day as he was returning home, happening to see in a field a crowd of persons, and supposing something was wrong, he rode up and heard that one of the horses in a team had suddenly dropped down dead. The owner was in great distress, the loss would wellnigh ruin him. "Don't be disheartened, honest man," said Gilpin. "I'll let you have this horse of mine." "Ah, Master," replied the countryman, "my pocket will not reach such a beast as that." "Come, come," said Gilpin, "take him, take him, and when I demand my money then thou shalt pay me."

Those who had large families Gilpin most gladly helped, providing for the education of the children and for their settlement in the world.

His living was worth about £400 a year, which would be equal to between £3000 and £4000 of our money; but, large as it was, people were astonished how he could do so much. There were other expenses too besides those which have been mentioned; he rarely supported fewer than six students at the university—at his death there were nine—and these cost him ten pounds each. His expeditions to the North and

elsewhere, which will come under our notice in due order, involved a considerable outlay. "When he began a journey," says an old manuscript Life of him, "he would have ten pounds in his purse, and at his coming home he would be twenty nobles in debt, which he would always pay within a fortnight after." He frequently visited the gaols in the course of his travels, and when he did so never left the prisoners without purchasing them the necessaries they required. No Howard had yet been raised up to demand gaol reforms, and the condition of the prisoners was deplorable. All this and doubtless much more he did, but could not possibly have done unless he had been a most careful and frugal manager, indeed his frugality equalled his generosity: on himself he spent next to nothing, and in the management of his affairs everything was most carefully looked after and waste and extravagance utterly forbidden. Frugality in money matters was to Gilpin as much a duty as the husbanding of time. He knew that as it is the man who carefully uses his spare moments that makes the most of his life, so it is he who avoids all waste in his money expenditure and looks carefully after the pence as well as after the pounds, that alone has the full use of his wealth and is able to do with it what seem to others impossibilities. He united the utmost frugality with the utmost generosity and bountifulness,—a feat which a great many people think simply impossible.

Gilpin was apparently a good business man and one who felt that it was part not so much of his frugality as of his honesty to look after the revenues of his

Rectory, and to resist all encroachments or unfair demands.

The following extract from the Records of the Consistory Court of Durham shows Gilpin careful to claim all the dues which belonged to his living.

"In a suit wherein Richard and Robert Wright were complai: and Robert Hutton, D.D., Rector of Houghton le Spring was deft.—30. Nov: 1604.

"*Henry Anderson* of *Haswell,* in the Parish of *Pittington, Esq.,* aged about 56 years, saith that he has known the Wrights for xii (12) years. Upon the 8th article examinat saith that this examinat doth verie well remembre that about fortie fower yeares agoe he being then brought up at Cocken in the p'ish of Houghton, with Mr. John Franklin and his wife (grandmother to the examinat), did see Mr. Bernard Gilpin late parson of Houghton come to Cocken where he did confer with the said Mr. Frankland and one Mr. Sherwood, then occupier of the cole pitts within the grounds of Rainton and Moorhouse for certain coles which he the said Mr. Gilpin claimed as parson of Houghton, and then this examinat did heare——(illegible) that James Carre then banksman of the said cole pitts, namely one pitt there going in the fields of Moorhouse and another pitt going in Rainton felds, had denyed to deliver any coles to the said parson, and that therefore the said Mr. Gilpin came and demanded to have coles as his predecessor Mr. Frankland then late parsone of Houghton or his deputies or paruners had formerly had, and did say that he expected to have the like.

H. ANDERSON."

The Records of the Durham Chancery (Interrogatories and Depositions 1610) afford another evidence of Gilpin's attention to the property of his living, in the following passage:

"Dr. Hutton, person of Houghton, & Sir Wm. Constable & ux. As to whether the mannor of South Biddicke is titheable in full. Ambrose Lowther of Lamesley, clarke, ag. 64, was curate under one Mr. Bernarde Gilping for 3 years. Mathew Coperthwaite of Brignell B. D. ag. 67. Mr. Gilping then person and master to this deponent." "About 46 years since one Robert Lysle gent. occupyer of the Moytie of the said mannor of South Biddicke, and haveing newlie plowghed upp a piece or parcell of ground (being new ryfte) at that tyme, Mr. Gilping, then person and master of this examint did send this deponent to the said Robert Lysle, saying that, unlesse he gave him some considerasione or composione, he would have and take tythe of that ground in kynde, and presently after the sicknes of the plague fell into Houghton. Whereupon Mr. Gilpin presently went to Biddicke and was with the said Mr. Lysle diverse weekes together, and, after that tyme, such composicione was betweene them for the said tythes. As what the same was this ext. knoweth not, but afterwards there was no suite or variance betweene them for yt."

These documents refer to the earlier years of Gilpin's incumbency: namely, from 1560 to 1564. But there is no reason to suppose that this strict guardianship of the temporalities of Houghton was ever relaxed.

Gilpin united in his character a scrupulous honesty, a stern reprobation of wrong-doing, a very careful

thriftiness which made one penny go as far as two would with most people, and a most generous charity in money and in all other matters. With such a character his influence for good was infinitely greater than if he had been merely liberal and not at the same time strict in money matters either due to him or from him, if he had been merely kind-hearted, and not at the same time resolute in his opposition to wrong.

It would be pleasant to recall some of the friends whom Gilpin would make among his parishioners. Unfortunately the materials are almost *nil.* But an old brass on the wall of Houghton Church, in the transept close to his own altar tomb, records the death of one between whom and the Rector there must have been for many years a cordial sympathy and fellowship in good works; here it is:—

"Hereunder resteth the body of Margery Bellasis, wife of Richard Bellasis of Henknol, who had unto her eight sonnes and four daughters; then she, becominge widowe, so continued the rest of the space of 58 yeares, bestowinge her whole time only in hospitalite and reliefe of the poore. And being of the age of 90, deceased August 20, 1587."

Thus it appears that this worthy dame died a little more than three years after Gilpin.

Surely Madame Bellasis and Bernard Gilpin were kindred spirits, and went hand in hand in many good works. That they were friends appears from the fact that she left Gilpin "one old angel for a token,"* and that he was a witness of her will; and the friendship between

* Surtees Society, *Wills and Inventories*, ii., p. 315.

the families is evident from Bishop Carlton's dedication of his *Life of Gilpin* to one of her sons, "Sir William Belusis," as he spells it, and from the appointment by Gilpin himself of another of her sons, Richarde Bellasis, as one of the "supervisours" of his will. The "Belasyses" (another spelling) were at that time the chief family in the neighbourhood, and the only family which could claim to be representatives of the ancient lords of Houghton, the Le Springs.* Their ancestral seat of Henknoll is in the parish of St. Andrews, Auckland, and their original home at Bellasis in the Parish of Billingham. But Mr. Bellasis at this date resided at Morton House near Houghton.

Bellasis, Bellysis, daft was thy sowell,
When exchanged Bellysis for Henknowell.

It has often been remarked that Houghton has enjoyed an almost unbroken succession of good Rectors since Gilpin's days. Among these may be mentioned Peter Heylin the historian, two archbishops, Sancroft and Secker, Sir George Wheeler, and George Davenport. Perhaps, however, none of these can be said to have so fully succeeded to the entail of Gilpin's virtues as the last named, Davenport; he too, like Gilpin, declined further preferment when it was offered; he said "he had more preferment, and a better worldly estate than he could show any good husbandry." His monumental slab in Houghton Church commemorates him in the folowing lines:—

If the soul's transmigration were believed,
You'd say good Gilpin's soul he had received,

* Surtees' *History of Durham*, i., 146.

> And with as liberal hand did give, or more,
> His daily charity unto the poor;
> For which, with him, we doubt not he's possest
> Of righteous man's reward—eternal rest.

He died in 1677, having held the living for thirteen years.

Thus then Gilpin discharged, to the utmost of his ability, the cure of souls at Houghton.

Having learnt Christ Himself in the gospels which he had made so long his constant study for that very purpose, he lived Christ among his people, making himself the servant of all, that he "might by all means gain some." From the pulpit of that grand old Church of St. Michael were heard in his days such sermons as had never been heard there before, and, in and out among the streets and alleys of Houghton, and far and wide to the numerous villages which were comprised within its boundaries, Gilpin went a messenger of light and salvation; in word and deed, in voice and face, carrying with him wherever he went much of the sweet savour of Christ. Never before had such times been known in Houghton, and long after his decease it might be said of him:—

> The sweet remembrance of the just,
> Bears fruit and blossom in the dust.

Well would it have been for England if there had been an army of men like Gilpin in the critical and troubled times in which he lived. Such men are, however, rare at any time, and were not less rare then. But their influence is always out of all proportion to their numbers, and certainly Gilpin's influence extended

over a very wide area, and was felt throughout the whole of the diocese of Durham. The Parson of Houghton was recognised as a power for good, not only in the county Durham; in the wildest and most uncivilised districts of Northumberland also everybody knew Bernard Gilpin; knew and loved him.

And his influence survives still; we know not how many noble lives and deeds of faith have been inspired by his example during the last three centuries, and even to-day Houghton people feel a thrill of pride when his name is mentioned, and recognise the honour which their Church and Parish enjoy from having been the scene of the labours of Bernard Gilpin.

GILPIN IN ROTHBURY CHURCH.

See pp. 164, 165.

From a Painting by William Bell Scott, Esq., in the Centre Hall at Wallington Hall, Northumberland, the Seat of Sir C. Trevelyan, Bart.

CHAPTER IX.

RELIGION IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND.

I HAVE already alluded to the neglected and benighted condition of the majority of parishes throughout the country, and notably in the North, during the earlier years of the reign of Elizabeth. This was partly the entail of a bad past; partly the necessary result of a great dislocation and reconstruction which involved much confusion, and was long ere it could work efficiently and smoothly. But in the North district it was also due to the fact that the Reformation was anything but welcome to the majority of the people, least of all to the gentry, and that the clergy were by no means loyal to the new order as a rule.

In some degree also it was the result of the alienation of Church revenues, coupled with the abolition of other sources of clerical income, by which the clergy were reduced to poverty, and in many cases there were no ministers at all.

Everything was out of joint, and especially in the North of England—the gentry disaffected, the people still adhering to their old practices and beliefs, and very few to teach them anything better, as often as not no teachers at all, and such as there were, with rare excep-

tions, men who looked one way while they seemed to row another: the prospect was such as to make the stoutest heart faint.

Wherever Gilpin turned he beheld the grossest evidences of neglect and spiritual destitution, and his pious soul was deeply stirred thereby. "There was no part of the British Empire," says Sir Cuthbert Sharp, "where the first pale and struggling ray of the Reformation broke with more unwelcome lustre." Sir Ralph Sadler states, in 1569, "There be not in all this countrey, ten gentilmen that do favour and allowe of her majestie's proceedings in the cause of religion," and he describes the people as ignorant, superstitious, and blinded with the "olde popish doctrine."* We may form some idea of the condition of matters from certain statistics which have been preserved of the diocese of Ely, which was of course better off than Durham. In this diocese it appears that out of its 156 parishes, 47 had no minister at all, 57 were held by non-resident incumbents, and only the remaining 52 had resident pastors; and the few clergy who were resident in the parishes were too often only cumberers of the ground and scandals and disgraces to the cause of Christ. The best of them "poore base preistes" who had no learning and had to exist on the barest pittance; men who were only able to stumble through the prayers morning and evening, nor did the people expect, nor the priests care to do, more. Bishop Jewel denounces the sad spiritual destitution of his age, "the poor children," he declares,

* Sir Cuthbert Sharp's *Memorials of the Rebellion of* 1569, p. x.

"cry out for bread, the bread of life, but there is no man to break it to them." *

With religious provision in this deplorable state, either no clergy at all, or such as there were most disloyal and most incompetent, Gilpin resolved that so far as possible, without neglecting Houghton, he would do his utmost to fill up the breaches created by this shameful spiritual destitution and neglect. Accordingly he made it his duty every year to visit the most neglected parishes in the northern counties, Yorkshire, Cheshire, Westmoreland, Cumberland and Northumberland, staying a day or two in each and preaching to the people the simple truths of the Gospel.

Many years before Gilpin's labours, namely in or about 1551, John Knox was commissioned by Archbishop Cranmer to preach as an itinerant among the uncivilised people of the north of England, and in the Marches towards Scotland.† He was, in fact, one of Edward VI.'s six chaplains who were employed as itinerant preachers in various parts of England, including the Marches of Scotland; the King gives their names in his journal as "Bill, Harley, Perne, Grindal, Bradford and Knox." ‡

Two centuries later Grimshaw of Haworth did a similar work, "for many years he was known throughout Yorkshire, Cheshire, Lancashire and North Derbyshire as the apostle and preacher of the district." §

But there were certain parts of the country which

* Jewel's *Sermons*, pp. 181, 190.

† Redpath's *Border History*, p. 577.

‡ King Edward VI.'s Journal, in App. to Burnet's *Reformation*, ii., p. 40. See Bradford's *Works*, ii., p. xxvi.

§ Ryle's *Christian Leaders of the Last Century*, p. 121.

particularly demanded attention, and among these none needed evangelising so much as the districts of Tynedale and Readsdale in Northumberland. These were practically heathen lands where the Word of God was very rarely if ever heard from year's end to year's end, and where violence, rapine, thieving and murder held undisputed sway.

The "debatable land" between England and Scotland had long been the theatre of raids, battles, and confusion; so that, as Dr. Raine observes, "It appears a matter of surprise that the country at large, within fifty miles of the Borders on either side, should have been inhabited at all, as neither by day nor night could a man reckon upon his life or substance for a single hour." * The story which Lord Dacre, who held Norham Castle for the Bishop of Durham, has to tell from time to time is only of "roodes" or raids into Scotland, and of villages, towns, castles ravaged and burnt, and prisoners and cattle and horses taken. The same sort of thing was going on from the Scottish side; though on the whole the Scotch seem to have got the worst of it.

This was authorised rapine and plunder, but along with it and growing out of the lawlessness engendered by the constant warfare, there were the private raids, feuds, thefts, and carnage, which those of the English side, and doubtless on the Scottish side also, carried on against their fellow-countrymen.

Among these lawless vagabonds and free lances the inhabitants of Tynedale and Readsdale enjoyed an unenviable notoriety, and under the leadership of the

* Quoted in Jerningham's *Norham Castle*, p. 250.

Charltons and other clans they harried the inhabitants of the debatable country and its borders, who were constantly open to plundering and murdering invasions from their neighbours in these and other dales, as well as from the Scotch. "It was an old sore, and very notorious; for instance, R. de Umfravil held the castle of Harbottle and manor of Otterburn," in the time of Henry VI., "on the service of keeping the Vale of Redesdale free from *wolves* and *robbers*." The fellowship of these recals a story told of Goetz von Berlichingen, a German freebooter, who seeing a pack of wolves fall upon a flock of sheep, exclaimed, "Good luck, dear comrades, good luck to *us* all and everywhere." * The Bishop of Carlisle writing to Cardinal Wolsey in 1522, says significantly, "There is more theft, more extortion by English thieves than there is by all the Scots of Scotland;" and he goes on, "In Hexham, every market day, there is fourscore or a hundred strong thieves, and the poor men and gentlemen also seeth them which did rob them and their goods, and dare not complain of them by name, nor say one word to them. They take all their cattle and horse, their corn, and they carry it to sow, or to the mill to gryne, and at their houses bid them deliver what they will have, or they shall be fired and burnt." †

Such were the people of Tynedale and Readsdale, that when Camden and Cotton visited the Roman wall in 1599 they durst not venture into those parts. Camden says, "The wall goeth forward more aslope to

* *The Howard Papers*, p. 595 note, and Seebohm's *Protestant Revolution*, p. 30.

† *Norham Castle*, p. 250.

Iverton, Forster, and Chester-in-the-wall, near to Busy Gap; a place infamous for thieving and robbing, where stood some castles as I heard, but I could not with safety take the full survey of it, for the rank robbers thereabouts." Sir Robert Bowes, in his *Book of the State of the Frontiers and Marches betwixt England and Scotland in* 1550,* writes:—

"That countreye of North Tyndall is much given to thefte, and must be kept continually in dread of justice. They stand most by fower surnames, Charltons, Robsons, Doddes, and Mylbornes. There be some amonge them that have never stollen themselves, which they call true men; and yet such will have rascalles to steale either on horsebacke or foot, whom they doe resset and will receive parte of the stollen goodes. There be very fewe hable men in all that countrey but have used to steale in England or Scotland. And if any theafe be of any great surname or kyndred, and be lawfully executed by order of justice, the rest of his kynne or surname beare as much mallice, which they call deadly feade, against such as followe the lawe against their cossen the theaf, as though he had unlawfully kylled hym with a sword, and will by all meanes they can seeke revenge there uppon. And in tymes past they have at sundrye tymes broken out of order all the whole countrey, and have committed very great and haynous attemptates, as burning or spoyling of whole towneshippes and murdering of gentlemen and others whom they had griefe or mallice unto."

The state of this district was a matter of common fame. Bishop Ridley, himself a Northumberland man,

* Hodgson's *Northumberland*, vol. ii., part iii., p. 224.

refers to "the robbers of the Borders."* According to Surtees † the clergy were as bad as their flocks:—

> "The priest of Shorewood he would rein
> The wildest war-horse in yon train;
> But then no spearsman in the hall
> Will sooner swear, or stab, or brawl." ‡

In a list of Border thieves dated 1552, the priest and curate of Bewcastle are both included. Both sides of the Borders, and east and west throughout the Marches, there was little to choose either among priests or people,—one description fitted all.

Bishop Pilkington says, "In this rude, superstitious people on the Borders, priests go with sword, dagger, and such coarse apparel as they can get, not being curious and scrupulous what colour or fashion it be." §

A curious picture of the state of society at a somewhat earlier date is afforded by a "Monition of the Greater Excommunication," which was issued by Richard Fox, Bishop of Durham, in 1498, against the thieves and robbers of Tynedale and Readsdale, their aiders and abettors, lay and clerical. They are herein described as quite denying that their depredations were criminal, inasmuch as it was thus that they got their living, "*tanquam artem, unde victum suum quærant.*" Illustrating what I have already remarked, they are said not at all to confine their raids to Scotland, but to invade towns and villages and hamlets in the bishopric of Durham, and the county of Northumberland. Justices of the peace and country gentlemen

* *Works*, p. 402. † *Surtees*, i. 166.
‡ *Marmion*, i. 4. § *Pilkington's Works*, p. 659.

and noblemen are described as in the habit of conniving at their crimes and sharing in their unholy gains. It is added that in Tynedale and Readsdale there were many chaplains of loose lives, suspended, excommunicated priests, totally ignorant, some of them unordained, who ministered to these banditti in torn and filthy vestments, and admitted them to mass and to other ordinances of the Church, without any admonition or restitution. Wherefore the bishop gave notice to all rectors, vicars, chaplains, curates, &c., in the district, to proclaim these open and notorious thieves by name in the church, and to admonish them to abstain from their evil ways on pain of the greater excommunication. The chaplains and gentry who favoured them were also to be put on their good behaviour.*

This monition seems not to have been without some effect. Shortly after a letter testimonial was issued containing the names of certain who had renounced their evil ways and were absolved, to wit, "Sandy Charlton, Christy Milborn, Howy Milborn, Atkin Milborn, Sawny Robeson, Davy Robeson, Gilly Tod of ye Crake-aller of Smebemouth, George Tod, Rowly Tod, Tawny Tod, Sandy Tod of ye Shawe, George Mershell, and Sandy Hunter." †

This list of surnames is an interesting record, probably many representatives of those old Northumberland families still survive in the district.

* For the text of this Monition, see *Depositions and other Ecclesiastical Proceedings from the Courts of Durham*, p. 37, published by the Surtees Society; also Surtees' *History of Durham*, i. 166, and Appendix vii. to Scott's *Introduction to the Border Minstrelsy*.

† See Appendix vii. to *Introduction to Scott's Border Minstrelsy*, i., p. 274.

Shut in to their own valleys, intermarrying amongst themselves, and having little communication with the outer world, the clergy being as rude and wild as their flocks, it was only what might be expected that the grossest ignorance and superstition should reign, as it did, in Tynedale and Readsdale and throughout the Border lands.

At the same time these people had their own rude notions of right and wrong, somewhat artificially adapted to their mode of living no doubt, but at least a confession on their part that their lives needed some apology, and that they did not claim an absolute independence of conscience and of God.

They do not appear to have been naturally blood-thirsty or cruel, or without any regard to the sacredness of human life. And yet in cases of what was called "deadly feud," all humanity and tenderness were laid aside. On such occasions the whole force of the offended clan was directed to the revenge of the wrong done to themselves or to one of their kinsfolk. The man who had done the wrong, and his whole kindred and tribe, were to be exterminated if possible. In the words of the *Survey of Newcastle,* "they will subject themselves to no justice, but inhumanly and barbarously fight and kill one another. They run together in clans as they term it, or names."*

In fact, in the "deadly feud" the Borderer became a remorseless savage; "if any two of them," says a cotemporary record, "be displeased, they bang it out bravely, one and his kindred against the other and his." Those "deadly feuds" were a rough method of

* *Survey of Newcastle,* Harleian Miscellany, iii.

doing justice, and in judging them we should not forget that for centuries the King's writ did not run in these dales, that in fact there was no recognised authority for maintaining order and punishing wrong-doers, and hence each clan was driven to some such resource as the "deadly feud" afforded.

Robbers as they were, their ideas as to the difference between *meum* and *tuum* were of the haziest character. In fact they held that property was common to all who stood in need of it; a convenient doctrine for those who have none, but objectionable to those who have. And after stealing a man's horse or cow upon this principle, they were not above hobnobbing with him over a friendly cup occasionally, which might or might not have a humanising effect on all concerned. I am afraid it must be confessed that the heinousness of thieving was very far from their comprehension, and that they did not care to be enlightened.

One good trait should be mentioned, that for fidelity to their word great praise could be awarded, at least to the Tynedale men. Of the Readsdale folk, if Sir Thomas Bowes was well informed, we must hold that "they be not soe trusty of their wordes and promises." In both Dales, however, there was a capacity for cunning and chicane if circumstances seemed to require it, which was not commendable, and land-owners found it rather difficult to get their rents out of people who had insuperable objections to the recognition of a landlord, therein involved.

Subsisting by rapine, they thought that it was a sufficient apology, if their other theory about property was

not acceptable, that in their exposed position it was useless to think of earning a living by the cultivation of the soil, and that, their own cattle being always liable to be stolen, to steal another man's was only fair reprisal. And if they forgot to cross the Borders before making such reprisals and took their next-door neighbour's beasts instead, being handier and easier than taking a Scotchman's, well, it seemed to them an unnecessary scrupulousness of conscience to raise objections on such scores. Why should that be theft to-day, which as exercised a few miles away to-morrow would be only fair reprisals? And so they were conscionable brigands and banditti, their hands against every man, and every man's hand (who durst) against them.

Charms and spells and superstitions of the grossest absurdity abounded in the Dales, and what religion they had was only a system very much in harmony with these tendencies,—to anything deeper they were quite indifferent.

While thinking of Tynedale and Readsdale, however, we must not forget that Tynedale gave a name and an ancestry to one of the most distinguished of our English Reformers; "a certain well-informed young man," as Erasmus describes him, who, soon after the publication of Erasmus' New Testament, "began to lecture with success on Greek Literature at Oxford," to wit:—William Tyndale, the translator of the New Testament into English, "to establish," as he said, "the laity in the truth." *

Richard Fox, Bishop of Durham, as we have seen, had done what in him lay to penetrate the darkness of

* Blunt's *History of the Reformation*, p. 109.

this benighted people, and to lead them to better things. So, years after, John Knox had added his efforts, and ten years or more after Knox, Gilpin, as is now to be recorded, tried his hand and not without most encouraging results. But for several generations still the Dalesmen bore much the same character as they had borne for centuries.

In 1649 Gray, in his *Chronographia*, says:—"There are many dales, the chief are Tinedale and Readsdale,—a country that William the Conqueror did not subdue. The people are famous for thieving, they are all bred up and live by theft. They come down from these dales into the low countries, and carry away horses and cattell so cunningly that it will be hard for any to get them or their cattell except they be acquainted with some master thiefe; who for some mony (which they call saufey mony) may help them to their stolen goods, or deceive them. There is many every year brought in by them into the gaole of Newcastle, and at the assizes are condemned and hanged, sometimes twenty or thirty."*

Sir Walter Scott, in the introduction to the *Scottish Minstrelsy*, quotes from the biography of Richard Cameron, the Presbyterian Evangelist, what might probably have been just as applicable to the people of Tynedale and Readsdale at the same date—the beginning of the 17th century—and recalls one of the incidents of Gilpin's work among them. Cameron was sent first to preach in Annandale: "But how can I go there?" he remonstrated; "I know what sort of people they are." "Go your way," was the reply,

* Quoted in Bruce's *Wallet Book of the Roman Wall*, p. 113.

"Ritchie, and set the fire to their tails." He went, and the first day he preached upon the text, "How shall I put thee among the children?" In applying it, he said, "Put you among the children! the offspring of thieves and robbers!! We have all heard of Annandale thieves." Some of them got a merciful cast that day, and said afterwards that it was the first field meeting they ever attended, and that they went out of mere curiosity to see a minister preach in a tent and people sit on the ground.*

Cameron seems hardly to have been in his element in this mission, and I hope and believe that Gilpin showed more gentleness and prudence in addressing his Tynedale and Readsdale congregations than Cameron did: he could never have won their hearts if this had been the style of his first sermon.

There was this difference also between the two men, Cameron was almost driven into the tent when he preached, Gilpin unasked sought out this work for himself, and was a most willing and God-trusting evangelist. He delivered his message out of a loving heart, and with a full belief in the power of God's truth to change even these wild, lawless people.

During the last eighty or ninety years a great change has come over this Border country, greater perhaps than in almost any other part of England; and the people are no longer the fierce, inhospitable, lawless set which they once were. Speaking generally of the Borders the authors of the *Pictorial History of Scotland* say: "The present state of this celebrated district exhibits a striking contrast to its former condition.

* Scott's *Border Minstrelsy*, i., p. 190.

With the introduction of law and order, and the progress of improvement, barren wastes, once the resort of freebooters, have become fruitful fields; towns and hamlets, mansions, farmsteadings and cottages now enliven those scenes which for ages had been marked by works of hostility; and in those defiles where the rude rievers found a refuge, rich and almost countless flocks have long wandered in perfect security." *

The people of Tynedale and Readsdale are now quite as civilised and much more honest than the average of English country folks. Crime is almost unknown: all traces of the old freebooting practices have completely passed away. The poor are few in number and well cared for, and the wages are said to be higher than those paid to country servants, male and female, in any other part of England. Like their neighbours to the North in Glendale, the dwellers in these valleys have very stern, solid views on questions of morality and politics.

Peace and order, industry and enlightenment now prevail, where for centuries only disorder and rapine and superstition reigned. In Gilpin's days, however, matters were perhaps at their worst, and the devotion of a good Samaritan such as he proved was sorely needed.

This then was the terrible country which Gilpin visited every year and in the depths of winter, and where he had regular fixed places for preaching. If there was a church he would use it, if not, a barn or any other sufficiently large building would serve his purpose; and the people always came in crowds to hear

* *Pictorial History of Scotland*, ii. p. 501.

him, some for his teaching, others no doubt for his charity. In his sermons he spoke very plainly to his hearers of the wicked and careless lives they were leading; explained to them what real godliness was; preached to them Christ and His Redemption; instructed them in their duties to God and to their neighbours, and lost no opportunity of warning them against the sins and dangers to which they were exposed. Such preaching was not thrown away, many of his hearers were stirred up to a sense of sin and salvation, and even in the wildest communities some, at all events, were converted to the truth.

All this was a difficult and laborious employment. The country was so miserably poor that the only provisions to be got were such as extreme hunger alone could make palatable. The badness of the weather, and of the roads through a mountainous country and in the depth of winter, exposed him to severe hardships. Sometimes he was overtaken by the night, the country being uninhabited in some parts for miles together, and as Bishop Carlton tells us, "was forced to lodge in the snowe all night." In which extremity he would command William Airy, who for the most part attended on him, "to trot the horses up and down, and neither permit them nor himselfe to stand still, whiles he himselfe in the meane while did bestirre himselfe, sometimes running, sometimes walking, as not able to stand still for cold." * All this he was content to endure if he might only do some good to these unfortunate and ignorant people.

In such an occupation he could not fail to meet with

* Carlton's *Life of Gilpin*, p. 108.

many interesting adventures. On one occasion when Gilpin was at Rothbury, one of the deadly feuds between two clans, which were common and were the recognised method of settling disputes, was in progress. Carlton tells the story as follows:—

"Uppon a time when Mr. Gilpin was in these parts at a towne called Rothbury, there was a pestilent faction amongst some of them that were wont to resort to that church. The men being bloodily minded practised a bloody manner of revenge, termed by them Deadly-feod. If the faction on the one side did perhaps come to the church, the other side kept away, because they were not accustomed to meet together without bloodshed. Now so it was that when Mr. Gilpin was in the pulpit in that church, both parties came to church in the presence of Mr. Gilpin; and both of them stood, the one of them in the upper part of the church, or chancell, the other in the body thereof, armed with swords and javelins in their hands. Mr. Gilpin somewhat mooved with this unaccustomed spectacle goeth on neverthelesse in his sermon, and now a second time their weapons make a clashing sound, and the one side drew neerer to the other, so that they were in danger to fall to blowes in the middest of the church. Hereupon Mr. Gilpin commeth downe from the pulpit, and stepping to the ringleaders of either faction, first of all he appeased the tumult. Next, he labowreth to establishe peace betwixt them, but he could not prevaile in that: onely they promised to keepe the peace unbroken so long as Mr. Gilpin should remaine in the church. Mr. Gilpin seeing he could not utterly extinguish the hatred which was now inveterate betwixt them, desired them that yet they would forbear hostility so long as he should remaine in those quarters: and this they consented unto. Mr. Gilpin thereupon goeth up into the pulpit againe (for he had not made an end of his sermon) and spent the rest

of the allotted time which remained in disgracing that barbarous and bloody custome of theirs, and (if it were possible) in the utter banishing of it for ever. So often as Mr. Gilpin came into those parts afterwardes, if any man amongst them stood in feare of a deadly foe he resorted usually where Mr. Gilpin was, supposing himselfe more safe in his company, then if he went with a guard." *

Again, to quote Carlton—

"Upon a certaine Lords-day Mr. Gilpin comming to a church in those parts, before the people were assembled, and walking up and down therein, espied a glove hanged on high in the church. Whereupon he demanded of the sexton, what should be the meaning thereof, and wherefore it hanged in that place? The sexton maketh answer that it was a glove of one of the parish who had hanged it up there as a challenge to his enemy, signifying thereby that he was ready to enter into combat with his enemy hand to hand, or with any one else who should dare to take down that challendge. Mr. Gilpin requested the sexton by some meanes or other to take it down. 'Not I, sir,' (replied the Sexton), 'I dare doe no such thing.' 'But' (said Mr. Gilpin) 'if thou wilt but bring me hither a long staffe, I will take it downe my selfe:' and so when a long stafe was brought, Mr. Gilpin took downe the glove and put it up in his bosom. By and by came the people to church in abundance, and Mr. Gilpin when he saw his time went up into the pulpit: In his Sermon he took occasion to reproove these inhuman challenges, and rebuked them sharpely for that custome which they had of making challenges by the hanging up of a glove. 'I heare,' saith he, 'that there is one amongst you, who even in this sacred place hath hanged up a glove to this purpose, and threatneth to enter into combat with whosoever shall take it downe. Behold, I

* Carlton's *Life of Gilpin*, p. 116.

have taken it down myselfe;' and at that word plucking out the glove shewed it openly, and then instructed them how unbeseeming those barbarous conditions were for any man that professed himselfe a Christian; and so laboured to perswad them to a reconciliation, and to the practise of mutuall love and charity amongst themselves." *

The following incidents are told by Surtees,† and are taken from a fragment of manuscript which was placed in his hands by Mr. Thurlow, then Rector of Houghton:—

"Gilpin did preach at a church in Redesdale where there was neither minister, nor bell, nor book, but one old book which was set forth in King Edward's time, and an old psalter torn to pieces, and he sent the clerk to give warning he would preach. In the meantime there came a man riding to the church style having a dead child laid before him over his saddle crutch, and cried to Mr. Gilpin, not knowing him, 'Come, parson, and do the cure,' and laid down the corpse and went his way. And Mr. Gilpin did bury the child, and did service and preached. And when he spoke of robbing and stealing, an old man stood of eighty years old and said, 'Then the deil I gyve my sall to, bot we are all theves.' Then Mr. Gilpin told them that they were not used to preaching, and the old man said they had never heard preaching before, so Mr. Gilpin desired him to hold his peace till he had preached, and so he did. There was a great number of people both gentlemen and others to hear him, and coming from the church he spied a red hand put on a

* Carlton's *Life of Gilpin*, p. 117.
† *History of Durham*, i., p. 170.

spear point in defiance of deadly feud. Mr. Gilpin did ask what the red hand meant, and they told him it was defiance betwixt two surnames, and Mr. Gilpin desired the gentlemen that was there to agree the parties."

I have modernised the spelling in the above, except in the words used by the old man, but have left the grammar and syntax as I found them. It is about as inartistical a narrative as could be well met with, and reminds one of the quaint pictures we find in old manuscripts, in which there is no proportion and no perspective, every object being represented on the same plane; but, rough as it is, it is very suggestive of the wild life in the midst of which Gilpin found himself in these northern expeditions, and better than a more polished narrative, places the whole scene before us.

Among these people Gilpin made many warm friends, and he was never more safe from insult or injury than when in the midst of clans with whom robbery and murder were almost their profession. If it was known, not a man in all that district would hurt a hair of his head. It once happened that unknowingly he was injured: by the carelessness of his servants his horses were stolen. The news spread like wildfire, and every one was full of indignation. The thief was glorying in his prize, when he heard whose horses he had got. Terrified at what he had done, he at once came trembling back, confessed his deed, returned the horses, and declared he believed the devil would have seized him directly had he stolen them knowing that they were Gilpin's.

"After his sermons," * Carlton tells us, "it was

* Carlton, p. 118.

his custome to distribute money amongst the poorer sort," and in these journeys he always visited and succoured the prisoners, as already noticed, "many of whom he brought to repentance for their former past life, and to honest conversation; and for many who were condemned to die, he procured pardon and saved their lives."

Wonderful was the influence which Gilpin exerted in Tynedale and Readsdale. If any man was in fear of an enemy, he would put himself under Gilpin's protection and feel quite safe while in his company. He could do much as he pleased with the people, and was little less than adored among them.

All this says much for Gilpin, but it says much too for these poor, benighted Dalesmen. There was in them the material for a far better life than they were leading, and it gives us less reason to be surprised when we learn what a solid, sturdy, and high-principled community their descendants form now.

It suggests also the responsibility which rests on nations and individuals to provide that, as far as rests with those outside, circumstances and conditions of life shall not be allowed to be unfavourable to respectable and virtuous conduct; and that whatever makes our brother to offend, or is a stumbling-block to him, shall be stopped or taken out of the way, so that no guilt shall remain at our doors for the ill conduct of any person or community.

Badly-constructed houses,—high rentals for miserable accommodation,—temptations to drink or to other dissipation or to improvidence,—the public toleration or acceptance of other than the highest

standards of right and wrong, and a host of agencies, material or otherwise, have much to do with the morality and self-control of the people, and are largely under the control of others than the persons directly affected thereby.

These poor wretched people were the victims of circumstances for which by no means the whole responsibility was their own: when those circumstances were altered by the union of England and Scotland—a political measure—at once they began to emerge from their lost and degraded condition.

Gilpin could not alter the circumstances, but he did the next best thing; he appealed by kindness and self-sacrifice to their hearts, and thus greatly helped and blessed them.

In our days, with political power so widely diffused, a double duty devolves on us, both to rescue the brother or sister who is being trodden under foot in the battle of life, and moreover to do our utmost to improve their surroundings, and to make circumstances favourable and not fatal to an honest and earnest life.

We have followed Gilpin into these wastes, and have seen him counting nothing too hard to endure if he could by any means save some of the poor people. This labour he continued for many years, and only gave it up when his powers would bear the strain no longer.

Hard work is not easy. Gilpin was a hard worker. He regarded his life as the great opportunity of activity and of diligent labour for God; what he did, he did with his might, and it was well done.

He possessed the secret which is known only to the

very diligent and very earnest, of doing two or three times as much work as less methodical and less earnest men could do. But let a man rise to the dignity of his position as a fellow-worker with God, and no labour frightens him, he becomes a very glutton of work, and is always finding something fresh to do, and time and strength to do it.

What kills men is not work but the want of it; far more die from *ennui* and idleness than from hard work. Gilpin worked himself out comparatively soon, but would he have lived longer if he had been a self-indulgent, idle man? I doubt it very much; and, after all, the value of life is not the length of it, but what you are able to put into it; it is not the "shadow on the dial," but the work for God in faith and love, which may be accomplished in a short or in a long time, and into which our whole hearts have been thrown, that constitutes our life.

GILPIN'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL, HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING. P. 171.

CHAPTER X.

THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

THE "new learning" took shape in England, in one direction at least, in the establishment of Grammar Schools; and the bequests and charitable donations which under the old system would have gone to swell the revenues of monasteries, convents, &c., from the early years of the reign of Henry VIII. gradually flowed more and more in this direction.

Other causes operated to the same end. Up to the time of the Reformation the religious houses, however imperfectly, had supplied the chief means of higher education; their downfall forced the question of schools into prominence, and the pressing necessity of providing a learned clergy lent something to the current; so that it acquired volume as the years rolled on, *vires acquirit eundo.*

Dean Colet may be said to have set this movement on foot when he founded St. Paul's School (1510) to train boys in the pure Latin and Greek of the new learning which had been imported from Italy, and adopting a new system to attract and gently lead the scholars into the paths of knowledge, abolishing the old stern flogging and driving methods. Others followed his

example, so that more grammar schools were founded in the latter years of Henry VIII. than had been during the previous three centuries. During the reigns of Edward VI. and Elizabeth, the impulse grew stronger, the influence of the new learning being now secondary and the other motives standing in the forefront. The glory of Edward's reign is the eighteen Grammar Schools which he founded. By the close of Elizabeth's reign the system of middle and upper class education which commenced with Colet's school, had really changed the face of England.

A classical education, and gentleness in imparting it, were Colet's ideas, the gentleness not always implicitly followed in the foundations which grew out of his movement, but the classical direction perhaps too rigidly imitated. It had been an honoured axiom among schoolmasters of the old style, that it was their business to subdue the spirits of their boys, and not to make the path of learning too easy or pleasant. Colet took a totally different view of the teacher's office; he would smooth the path for the children, and as no one else seemed able to write a Latin grammar simple enough for beginners, he did this himself. In his preface to this book he says he thought "nothing could be too soft or familiar for little children, specially learning a tongue unto them altogether strange," and he asks his scholars "to lift up their little white hands for him in return for his prayer for them." *

As Erasmus told Colet, this school of his was like the wooden horse filled with armed Greeks for the

* Seebohm's *Era of the Protestant Revolution*, p. 84.

destruction of barbarian Troy. And true it was that the men of the old school soon took alarm and opposed his institution, the Bishop of London denouncing St. Paul's School as a temple of idolatry. But it survived the fires, and became the model for hosts of similar establishments.

Filled with all the noblest impulses of the new learning, it is not to be wondered at that Gilpin should recognise the important part which education must play in the reformation of manners and morals, and in the propagation of true religion. As I have already said, almost from his first coming to Houghton he set his heart upon establishing a Grammar School.

His main object no doubt was the provision of a learned clergy, and not so much the general supply of learning to the community, least of all was it the education of the masses, as we understand it now, in elementary subjects. In his day the idea of the universal diffusion of the knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic was by no means generally accepted or even dreamed of.

We must not forget, however, that Sir Thomas More in the "Utopia" described elementary education as universal among the "Utopians," every one being taught to read and write; nor that John Knox in Scotland in his Book of Discipline recommended that schools should be established in every parish. This was not, however, done for many a long year after his time; the Scottish parochial schools as a general institution only date from 1696.* But in this respect these men were

* *Pictorial History of Scotland*, ii., 988.

before their age; and even in our own time how slowly has the idea of universal education made its way. Possibly even now there are some heretics surviving who hold that the knowledge of elementary subjects is neither necessary nor desirable for the working classes.

At all events, in Gilpin's day hardly any one had ever thought of such a thing as making primary education universal, while the education of the upper and middle classes was being realised as a great necessity, and so what he aspired to found was a Grammar School,—not an elementary school, but a school for instruction in the classical languages. The only expressed provision for elementary teaching in the school was "on playing days, and for the space of one hour after supper." And consistently with his main purpose, in filling his school with pupils he did not at all confine himself to Houghton boys, but wherever he met with a promising lad he brought him to the school, and a large proportion of the scholars were boarders.

This was, in fact, as we have seen, the direction which education was taking in those days, and in founding his school Gilpin cannot be said to have been in advance of the views of his time; only he stood in the front rank of the reformers of the day, and did his best to supply what every thoughtful person, from the Queen downward, felt to be a pressing necessity.

The following letter from Archbishop Parker to Bishop Grindal of London illustrates the straits to which the bishops had been driven in lack of suitable candidates for the ministry:—

Archbishop Parker to Bishop Grindal of London, 15th August, 1560.

"After our hearty commendations—Whereas, occasioned by the great want of ministers, we and you both, for tolerable supply thereof, have heretofore admitted unto the ministry sundry artificers and others, not traded and brought up in learning, and, as it happened in a multitude, some that were of base occupations; forasmuch as now by experience it is seen that such manner of men, partly by reason of their former profane arts, partly by their light behaviour otherwise, and trade of life, are very offensive unto the people, yea, and to the wise of this realm are thought to do great deal more hurt than good, the Gospel there sustaining slander; those shall be to desire and require you hereafter to be very circumspect in admitting any to the ministry, and only to allow such as, having good testimony of their honest conversation, have been traded and exercised in learning, or, at the least, have spent their time with teaching of children, excluding all others who have been brought up and sustained themselves either by occupation or other kinds of life alienated from learning. This we pray you diligently to look unto, and to observe not only in your own person, but also to signify this our advertisement to other of our brethren, bishops of our province, in as good speed as you may; so that you and they may stay from collating such orders to so unmeet persons, unto such time as in a convocation we may meet together, and have further conference thereof. Fare ye heartily well. From our house at Lambeth, the 15th of August, by your loving brother,

MATHEWE CANTUR."*

The curse of the land was an ignorant and godless clergy. No progress was possible until this evil was

* *Parker Correspondence*, p. 120, Letter lxxxvi.

redressed, while expense and labour devoted to this end were sure to be returned a hundredfold, and to prove *the* method of all others for establishing the Reformation and making the next generation better than the present.

This foundation work must be done, and Gilpin's school was intended to furnish that classical and scriptural knowledge which the best and most enlightened minds recognised as the true remedy for unquestionable maladies.

We must not, however, suppose that the education of the young outside Grammar School pupils was totally unprovided for in Gilpin's day; but by education was understood the knowledge of our duty to God and of our duty to our neighbour, and of the cardinal doctrines of the faith, it was by no means deemed necessary to include reading, writing, and arithmetic.* The only *official* provision made for elementary subjects beyond what voluntary efforts might supply was, as far as I know, in a regulation contained, I believe, in the injunctions of several of the bishops, certainly in those of Bishop Barnes in 1577, No. 11, to the effect "that all and every parson, vicar, and curate, within or of this our said diocese, which shall not be licensed

* Indeed, as appears from the following extract from a curious paper by Edward VI. on the "Reformation of Abuses," the word "education" was used often without any reference at all to religious or intellectual culture. "Education" is needed, he says, and then describes what he means thus:—"Youth must be brought up, some in husbandry, some in working, graving, gilding, joining, printing, making of clothes, even from their tenderest age, to the intent they may not, when they come to man's estate, loiter, as they do nowadays, and neglect, but think their travail sweet and honest." There is not a word about schooling or catechising or anything of the sort.—King Edward's *Remains*, in app. to Burnet's *History of the Reformation*, ii., p. 72.

to preache, shall duly, paynefully, and freely teache the children of their own severall parishes and cures to reade and write; and such as they shall, by good and due tryall, finde to be apte to learn, and of pregnant capacity, then they shall exhorte their parentes to set them to scholes and learnynge of the good and liberall sciences." *

If elementary schools were still in remote distances, Sunday schools as we understand them were unknown; but this is not to say that no provision was made for the religious instruction of the young on the Sunday. The following injunction of Archbishop Grindal in 1571 shows that great care was enjoined on the clergy in this respect; in a somewhat different form this injunction still survives in the fifty-ninth canon: "Ye shall every Sunday and holy day, openly in your church or chapel, call for, hear and instruct the children and servants, both menkind and womenkind, that be of convenient age within your parish (at the least so many of them at once by course as the time will serve, and as you may well hear and instruct for an hour at the least), before evening prayer, in the Ten Commandments, the Articles of the Belief, and the Lord's Prayer in English, and diligently examine and teach them the Catechism set forth in the Book of Common Prayer. And to the intent this thing may be more effectually executed, ye shall take the names of all the children, young men, maidens and servants, in your parish, that be above six years of age and under

* See Surtees' Society vol. for 1850, *Injunctions of Bishop Barnes'* p. 19; also Grindal's *Injunctions of* 1571, No. 24, Grindal's *Works'* 130.

twenty, which cannot say the Catechism, and shall call by course certain of them by name, every Sunday and every holy day to come to the Catechism, whereby you may easily note and observe what parents or masters be negligent in sending their children and servants to be instructed, and take occasion thereof, both privately and openly, to exhort them to send their youth as they are appointed, and shall present the refusers to the ordinary." *

Whatever other clergymen may have done, we may be sure that this "injunction," which was common in bishops' "injunctions," was carefully observed at Houghton, and that there the best part of all education of the young was provided for, while elementary subjects would probably be taught to some extent and as leisure permitted by his curate, and the Grammar School provided a classical education for the middle and upper class boys of the parish and neighbourhood.

On the whole then, when the Grammar School was built and at work, Houghton would be well supplied for the education of the young, as education was demanded and understood in those days.

The exact date at which the school was opened is unknown. The date of the charter (1574) is no guide; it was certainly open long ere that document was obtained. Hugh Broughton was one of the scholars, doubtless an early scholar; but if he was born in 1549, the date usually given, the school must have been opened a very few years after 1560.

Bishop Pilkington's letters-patent for the foundation

* Grindal's *Works*, p. 124. Cardinal Pole recommends something of the same sort. See *Reformatio Angliæ*, p. 16.

of his Grammar School at Rivington were signed on May 13, 1566, and the school was opened in the course of the same year.* There is good reason for believing that Gilpin's school was anterior to Pilkington's; in fact, that the bishop got the idea from the rector. Probably, therefore, the buildings at Houghton were already erected at least by 1566, and the school may have been in operation before the permanent schoolhouse was in existence.†

It is built on the east side of the churchyard, on slightly elevated ground shaded by the churchyard trees, and is a neat and plain edifice of stone, evidently built for centuries, some of the walls being of great thickness. Gilpin's erection included part of the present master's house, but both that and the school have been enlarged since his time. A little to the south are the almshouses, which are included in the charter of Elizabeth, but which were not built in Gilpin's time, but in the following century, one wing by George Lilburne of Offerton, the other by Rector Davenport. The inscription on this latter wing is characteristic of its builder; only the words, "All things come of Thee, O Lord, and of Thine own have we given Thee," and no name.

I have already in a previous chapter spoken of the origin of the title "Kepier" Grammar School, namely from the fact that the greater part of the endowments arose from tithes and lands which had belonged to the dissolved hospital of St. Giles at Kepier.

The building and endowment of this school cost

* Pilkington's *Works*, Parker Society, p. xi.
† Carlton's *Life of Gilpin*, p. 120.

Gilpin about £400, a very considerable sum in those days, equal to between £3000 and £4000 now, and at least a year's income of his living; and it was only by rigid self-denial and strict economy that he could spare so much.

This was not, however, enough for the whole endowment, and he had to turn to his friends in the neighbourhood for their help. Among these none contributed so liberally as Mr. John Heath of Kepier; he was a man of large means and a great encourager of learning, and gladly fell in with Gilpin's ideas. A considerable proportion of the endowment was from him, at least half; he had purchased the Kepier Hospital property in 1568, and gave part of it to the school.* Others also contributed, so that at length the full endowment which Gilpin contemplated, about £50 per annum, was secured. Among the endowments are the Gilley Tithes of Bishopwearmouth, of Ryhope, and of Chester-le-Street, and a rent-charge in lieu of the Gilley tithes of Cleadon.†

The settlement of the property of the school was one of Gilpin's chief concerns in his latter days, and, as appears from his will, it was "not so surely established as he could wish" when he died.

The following letter was written under the same apprehensions as Gilpin expresses in his will for the fate of the school:—

Endorsed:—"A copie of my letter to Maister John Heathe, Esquier. July 11, 1589.

* For an account of Kepier Hospital and its history and property, see Summers' *History of Sunderland*, p. 269.

† "Gilley Tithes" simply means the tithes of St. Giles's Hospital.

"*Dat optionem restituendi servetur.*

"Right Worshipfull,—After moste due commendaciouns, those are to certifie you that we have no monneye of Maister Bonnye to the schoole; and further more the rumer going a broade that we have no evidence for our schoole, but that all is uncertaine, hath caused Maister Franklin's heires* to call in y^e^ graunte of five markes given to our schoole out of Coeken; they have it, and what they will do w^th^ it I knowe not. But if it woulde please your worshippe to taike all that launde wh: you have given frealie to our schoole, that is y^e^ Gellie teinde of Wearmouth, the three pentions of Gateside, Whickham, and Riton, wh: are better than twentie markes anye yeare, and to amend therewithe the Churches of St. Nicholas and St. Gyles, whereof you are personn, or otherwise to use it as it pleasithe you. And then againe, if it would please you either to maike us good assurance of those p'celles wh: remaine, they woulde finde a reasonable schoolmaster to do muche good in this rude countrie, or if your pleasure be otherwise, I doubt not but youre wurshippe will restore such moneye as I should once have geven for East Rentoun, and y^t^ bergaine callide backe, I have gevin sence for ye Gellie tythes of Easingtoun, Ryope, Chester, and Cledon, wh: amountithe to twelve score poundes or near ther aboute, which somme committed to the handes of faithful men of Houghton Parishe, would bothe be a great relefe to a number of honest poor men wh: have payed so unreasonable fines that they want oxen to till thei grounde; and also it woulde finde a schoolemaster more than twentie years, and by y^t^ time I truste ye laste daye woulde followe shortlie, ther be so many tokens to declare y^t^ is at hand. I would be verie glad to knowe your pleasure; and I doubt not but you have as good evidence, and y^t^ in several writings, for

* Probably descendants of Gilpin's predecessor in the living.

y^e^ Gellie teindes of Easington, Ryope, Chester, and Cledon, as any need to be showed. Your pleasure knowne, I shall gladlie worke thereafter, not doubting but you will in al thinges seeke God's glorie and the salvation of your soull. God preserve you."* (At Houghton, &c.)

He was very anxious to have a royal charter for his school, but the negotiations for this object extended over several years. He was aided in this by his friend Lord Bedford; the first letter on the subject cannot have been later than some time in 1569, but the charter was only signed on April 2, 1574. In this charter Heath and Gilpin are appointed the first governors.

The following letters from the Earl of Bedford refer to the business of the Charter.

"To my very loving friend Mr. Bernard Gilpin.

"After my hearty commendations: I have received your letter of the 11th of last month; and besides the good news of your health, am glad also to hear of your well-doing in those parts, which want such men as you to call the rude sort to the knowledge and continuance of their duties towards God and their prince; whereof there is great lack.—Concerning your suit moved at Windsor, the troubles that have since happened have been so many and so great, that no convenient time hath served to prosecute the same; and the bill given in, I doubt, is lost. So that for more

* Extracted from Surtees' *History of Durham*, I. p. 158. The name of the writer of this letter is not given. It contains very curious propositions, which appear, however, not to have commended themselves to Mr. John Heath, as Surtees states that all the properties in question "were held by the school in 1616." The considerations suggested in view of the near approach of "ye laste daye" would apply, one would suppose, as much to Gillie tythes and land as to money, and constitute them the less valuable commodity.

surety, it were good you sent up another copy: and I will do my best endeavours to bring it to pass. I will likewise do what I can to get some of those county forfeitures to be granted by her majesty for the furtherance of your good purpose.—Here is no news to write to you: as for things in the north, you have them there: and albeit it hath been said, that a peace is concluded in France, yet it is not so. —And so wishing your health and well to do, I do hereby thank you for your gentle letter, and so commit you to God. "Your assured friend,

"F. BEDFORD.

"*London, May* 3, 1570."

"After my very hearty commendations; hoping in God you are in good health, who as He hath well begun in you, so may He keep and continue you a good member in His Church.—I have moved the queen's majesty for your school; and afterwards the bill was delivered to Mr. Secretary Walsingham, a very good and godly gentleman, who procured the same to be signed, as I think you have before this heard by your brother. Assuredly you did very well and honestly therein, and have deserved great commendations: a thing most necessary in those parts is this of all other, for the well-bringing up of youth, and training them in learning and goodness.—In any thing that I may stand you in stead, I pray you be bold to use me, whom you may assure yourself to remain ready to do you any good that I can.—So for this time I commend you to God.

"Your assured friend,

"F. BEDFORD.

"*Russel Place, March* 26, 1571."

In regard to the statutes of the school, Surtees is of opinion that "the first governors never probably exercised their power of enacting statutes," and that

Gilpin left the school "at his death with no other regulations than such as were contained in the original charter."*

But Surtees seems to be mistaken here. Gilpin's biographer, Prebendary Gilpin, describes him as spending much of his time latterly in revising the statutes, and in his will Gilpin requests his successor in the living to be "a continuale defender and mayntener of Kepier Schole in seeinge the statutes well kept, &c;" language he was hardly likely to have used if there were no statutes.

There are, moroever, statutes in existence to which Surtees alludes when he says "the earliest and only set of statutes extant bears date 1658, under the signature of Richard Bellasis, then a governor."

It is probable, though by no means certain, that these are not the original statutes; but if not the original, we cannot be far wrong in assuming that they are based upon Gilpin's model, and contain the substance and most probably the very language in many places of what he drew up.

It so happens that the Rivington statutes are extant and have been published twice within recent times, namely, in 1837 and in 1864; and as having been revised by Gilpin, we may fairly assume that there must have been a considerable likeness between the Houghton statutes and these.†

A comparison of the two leads me to the inference that the extant Houghton statutes may probably be

* Surtees' *History of Durham*, I. 159.

† *Statutes of Rivington School*, edited by S. Tebay, Head Master. Preston, 1864.

an abridgement of Gilpin's document—in the Rivington statutes, for instance, full directions are given as to what the school prayers are to be composed of; those of Houghton only provide that there shall be school prayers, and order that every scholar shall have them sewed into his grammar. Again, very complete particulars are given in the Rivington statutes as to the methods and subjects of the teaching; there is nothing of the sort in those of Houghton. Other things might be noted herein of the same nature. Possibly Gilpin's own statutes contained much of this sort of detail, which the revisers, if the statutes were revised, thought proper to omit.

The spirit of the Houghton statutes, as of those of Rivington School, was that religion must be an essential part in all education, and that a religious tone should pervade the whole school.

Gilpin's educational policy we need not doubt is embodied in the existing Houghton statutes, whether they are now in the exact form in which they left his hands or not, and a few extracts from this interesting document cannot therefore fail to be deserving of a place in his biography.

The master is to be "a Northern man, learned and of good life and conditions," and skilled in the education of youth.

His "principal regard" shall be "that his schollers frequent divine service on holy dayes with godly books to look on, and with attention hear and note, which things, that they may the better, wiselier and willinglier perform, he shall read to them the Catechisme, Greek and Latin appointed for all schooles;

teaching them in discourse of their lessons their duty towards God, their parents, and all others."

"He shall cause every morning as nearly as may be, that the bell be told, schollers com'd to school, and set to their books before seven o'clock, and that till eleven of clock none shall depart from thence either to breakfast or for any other cause without special licence." School to continue in the afternoon until six in summer and five in winter, having begun at one as may be inferred from the Rivington statutes.

"The master shall not take upon him the estate of marriage unless he have the consent of both the governors of the school in writing under their hands—with two justices* besides of this country named by the governors, and then if he proceed with their consent to marry he shall have the White House in Houghton with the appurtenance for his wife and children to dwell in."

The usher is required to teach "the meaner schollers" on playing days and after supper the space of an hour, to write, cypher, and understand their figures." Nothing is said here about teaching reading, and arithmetic and writing are thus relegated to other than school time. The Rivington statutes provide that "the master and usher shall appoint the boys that cannot write, every day one hour to learn to fashion their letters in, until they can do it something seemly."

* The marriage of the clergy generally in Queen Elizabeth's reign was not permitted except "by the advice and assent of the Bishop and two justices of the peace."—*Zurich Letters*, ii., p. 350. This is a provision which connects the statutes with Gilpin's age, and which could not have been inserted in 1658.

These statutes require also that as far as possible "none be admitted into the school but that can read; yet in great need the usher shall teach such to read." *

After mentioning "lawfully ordered punishments to the example and terror of others," in inflicting which the usher is bound to help the master if need be, an "item" comes towards the end of the statutes, that "if by means of any scholler's tales or otherwise any man or woman shall shamefully meddle with the master correcting of his schollers, both the schollers shall be punished accordingly and such slanderous people shall be caused by the constable or other rulers to be brought before some Justice to be examined why they should report such falsehoods to the discredit of the school." It is here quietly assumed that the master can never be wrong in such cases, but the investigation before a Justice would probably prove some protection for the boys and their parents and friends.

The master and usher are to have the power to appoint "weekly Impositors in the School from Friday to Friday for their duty as for speaking of Latin, for keeping orders and quietness in the school, for rods, sweeping of the school, seeing to the doors, keys and other dayly duties, for playing, swearing, swimming, shooting, &c."

There shall be "some time of recreation when the master shall think it meet for the schollers to exercise their bowes in matching either with themselves or strangers, in the Ox Pasture, or in Houghton Moor."

Archery was in Gilpin's time and long after in high

* *Statutes of Rivington School*, edited by Septimus Tebay, pp. 19 and 31.

estimation as an exercise and pastime for scholars, and indeed for all. Here is what Ascham says in his *Toxophilus*, "If a scholar should use bowls or tennis, the labour is so vehement and unequal, which is condemned of Galen; the example very ill for other men, when by so many acts they be made unlawful. Running, leaping, and quoiting be too vile for scholars, and so not fit by Aristotle's judgment; walking alone into the field hath no token of courage in it, a pastime like a simple man which is neither flesh nor fish. Therefore, if a man would have a pastime wholesome and equal for every part of the body, pleasant and full of courage for the mind, not vile and unhonest to give ill example to laymen, not kept in gardens and corners, not lurking on the night and in holes, but evermore in the face of men, either to rebuke it when it doeth ill, or else to testify on it when it doeth well; let him seek chiefly of all other for shooting." *

John Wesley, in establishing his school at Kingswood, forbad all play for the boys, holding that "he that plays while a boy will play when he is a man." † Gilpin held another and a sounder theory, that "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy."

Many other provisions are contained in these statutes. I have only selected the more interesting and curious, but one other must not be omitted, requiring the scholars "at Whitsuntide the Saturday after Holy Thursday, to pay to their master every one a penny for *fferalatoe* silver, and none shall be enforced to give more but upon their own good wills."

* Ascham's *Toxophilus*, p. 34.
† Hampson's *Life of Wesley*, ii., 159.

It was hardly likely that any of the boys would give more than the stipulated penny for rods "for their own backs," and so no doubt the sum total was very rigorously kept down to the normal one penny per boy. And yet for a penny each a good many rods could no doubt be purchased in those days; and no boy need go short of what he would deem an equivalent for his money.

The word "fferalatoe" above is doubtless a corruption of "ferulatio," which means beating with a ferula or rod, and was used to signify the punishment given to erring monks and schoolboys.

These extracts from the statutes will enable us to form a pretty accurate idea of the lines on which Gilpin wished his school to be conducted.

The Houghton School statutes were never signed, and are of no binding legal force now in consequence of that omission. This was decided by Lord Chancellor Hardwicke in a Chancery suit in 1751.

The following letter gives full particulars of the decision of the Lord Chancellor on all the points raised at that date. It is addressed to the Rev. Wm. Griffith, then master of the school:—

"Sir,—The cause came on again this morning at 10, and about one Lord Chancellor (Hardwick) began to give his opinion, which he divided into several heads; in the first place he sd he was clear there was a visitorial power which excluded this from his jurisdiction, and if in case the master was guilty of misbehaviour an application should have been made to the governors for redress; upon their refusal or neglect in complying therewith, to the heir of Heath and the successor of Gilpin, who at all times on reasonable

cause have a power of removing the governors and appointing others. And then he went and said that even tho' the case was within his jurisdiction the complaints concerning the master were without foundation; for that though he was a south countryman and no application had been made to the Provost of Queen's, he was allowed on all sides to be a man of abilities and learning, and well qualified for the office, and he was clear that he had a right to refuse boys from any boarding house and to take what fees he pleased. Then he proceeded to consider the statutes, and said they did not appear to be authentick, as not being signed by any body nor having any date, and as the proofs they had produced to show that there had been poor scholars were so inconsistent and variable, sometimes one, sometimes 23 and 4, it seemed as if the governors never thought them obligatory but to be complied with or not as they thought expedient; and he made a further observation that at this time of day the allowance of 7d. per week was so inconsiderable for the maintenance of a poor person that it was fitter that persons of such degree as would accept of it should apply themselves to husbandry and agriculture. And then he came to the governors and said he thought they had acted with honour and prudence to the good and advantage of the school, and if it seemed otherwise to anybody application might be made to the visitors for redress; but the information seemed to him to be without foundation and entirely vexatious and malicious, and therefore he was clearly of opinion that the information should be dismissed with costs, and decreed accordingly.

"I would have wrote to you before, but Mr. Mydleton told me he would congratulate you on your success, and am,

"Sir, your most faithful hble. servt.,

"J. WHARTON.

"*Lincoln's Inn, July* 4, 1751."

The school was always an object of Gilpin's warmest interest. He took great pains in the choice of suitable masters, and frequently visited and inspected it. The more promising scholars he would have to come often into his study at the rectory, where he gave them some of their lessons himself.

A great many of the scholars were boarders, and of these a considerable proportion were boarded, clothed, and educated at Gilpin's expense; and as the number of scholars increased and Houghton ceased to afford lodgings for so many, he threw the rectory open for the boys, and generally had twenty or more of them living under his own roof. For such of these as were better off, the sons of knights and squires, he received a small payment, but for many of them he made no charge.

He lost no opportunity of getting boys to his school; some he brought from his distant missionary centres—such, that is, as seemed likely to make good scholars and were anxious to learn; some he met with casually in his journeys. One of these was Hugh Broughton, whom he met on the road when he was once riding to Oxford, and who showed such talent and aptitude for learning in the off-hand examination to which Gilpin subjected him on the spot, that he took him with him to Oxford and then brought him back to Houghton to the school.

Carlton tells the story thus:—

"Now it happened upon a time as he was upon his way towards Oxford, that he espyed by the wayside a youth, one while walking and another while running. Mr. Gilpin demanded of him who he was, whence he

came, and whither he was going. He made answer that he came out of Wales, and that he was bound for Oxford with intent to be a scholler. Mr. Gilpin examineth the youth, and findeth him a prompt scholler in the Latine, and that he had a little smattering in the Greeke. 'And wilt thou' (saith Mr. Gilpin) 'be contented to goe with me? I will provide for thee.' The youth was contented: whereupon Mr. Gilpin tooke him along with him first to Oxford, afterwards to Houghton, where he profited exceedingly both in Greeke and Hebrew: whom Mr. Gilpin at the last sent to Cambridge." *

This same Hugh Broughton made a most ungrateful return to his benefactor, and as Bishop Barnes on a memorable occasion in after years put it, proved "a chicken which Gilpin had hatched and which did seek to pecke out his eyes." But this was the only black sheep that we hear of among his protegées at the school, some of whom became distinguished ornaments of the Church, among whom may be mentioned Gilpin's nephew, Henry Airy, author of a famous Commentary on the Philippians, and Provost of Queen's College, Oxford; and George Carlton, also a relative, who became Bishop of Chichester, and wrote Gilpin's life.

In subsequent times several distinguished men have been educated at Houghton Gammar School. A few names may be recorded here,—Richard Gilpin, Bernard's great-nephew, and the author of the *Dæmonologia;* William Romaine, the well-known evange-

* Carlton in Wordsworth's *Eccles. Biog.*, iv., p. 50.

list; Surtees, the historian of Durham; in more recent times Samuel Laing, and Admirals Elliot and Hope Grant; and within the last few years George Francis Walker, second wrangler in 1879, whose untimely end early in 1883, when he had recently arrived at Auckland, New Zealand, as professor of mathematics, is fresh in the memory of all.

Gilpin took quite a fatherly interest in his scholars, exercising the closest supervision over teachers and pupils alike. Many of the boys he sent at his own expense to the university, if they were promising youths and could not afford the expense, and it was his custom to go up each year to Oxford to see his students and to inquire into their conduct and progress. He also maintained a constant correspondence with their tutors, and encouraged the youths themselves to write often to him, giving an account of their studies and using him as their friend.

Gilpin lives in his Grammar School. For three hundred years it has perpetuated the enlightened Christian benevolence of its founder. His fears for its security and permanence have proved baseless; his best wishes for its usefulness have been more than realised. It will last probably as long as Houghton lasts.

His school embodies the idea of religious instruction as an essential part of education, and represents the result of the self-denying labours of a great and holy man. It is not the outcome of an Act of Parliament, or of an elective school board, or of a levied rate, all which elements are somewhat devoid of poetry, carry little of inspiration with them, and involve some-

thing of a compromise on the religious question. It is the ripest thought of one of the noblest men of the sixteenth century, and prolongs his life to all the generations of scholars which constantly pass through its portals, each of which cannot fail to derive some inspiration for truth and godliness from the thought of the founder of the school, Bernard Gilpin.

In some respects the present age has advanced beyond Gilpin's in regard to education. The classics are no longer the one absorbing subject of instruction; we have enlarged our curriculum immensely. But in the principle that religion is an essential part of all highest education, and that the moral and religious faculties should least of all be neglected in any scheme for the training of youth, the friends of learning of the sixteenth century were in advance of many of those of the nineteenth.

Thus then Gilpin made his noble contribution towards bringing in the better day. But he did not live long enough himself to see much of the most precious fruit of his labours.

Most of those who worked in the same way as he died before "receiving the promises." But ere the close of the sixteenth century a great change had come over the character and views of the English clergy. When Elizabeth ascended the throne, the parish priests were almost to a man imbued with Roman tenets, and their characters and social standing generally were very inferior; by the end of her reign all this was greatly changed, and a body of educated and enlightened men

occupied the livings of England. Much of this improvement is to be traced to the work done by the grammar schools, which kings and the excellent of the earth had been setting up in all parts of the country.*

* Gilpin's collateral descendant and biographer, William Gilpin, for many years conducted a very successful school at Cheam ; his methods of governing and training the boys were very ingenious, and not at all such as are generally adopted. A full account of these is contained in his autobiography, published in the *Gilpin Memoirs*, by the Cumberland and Westmoreland Antiquarian and Archæological Society, p. 123, &c. For an estimate of the beneficial results of his system, Warner's *Literary Recollections*, i. 320, may be consulted.

CHAPTER XI.

GILPIN AND THE PURITANS.

WHEN the reformers were finding a refuge from Queen Mary's persecutions on the Continent, Gilpin was returning to England. His hopes in some respects were different from theirs, and as it does not appear that he had held much or even any communication with them when abroad, he had escaped the influence of their views and principles. Gilpin never loved extremes, and a desire to avoid being drawn into the fellowship of his countrymen abroad may have had some influence in deciding him to return to England. It was the existence of such men as Gilpin within her pale that, under Providence, preserved the Church of England from being shipwrecked on the rocks of Puritanism, and enabled her to sail into the quiet waters of sober and apostolic doctrine and practice. The sturdy resolution and sound sense of men of his stamp, who could say when all things were in question, "thus far shalt thou go, and no further," saved the Church.

On the return of the exiles after the accession of Queen Elizabeth, they brought with them all that opposition to rites and ceremonies, and to the Episcopal system of Church government and discipline, which

they had learnt abroad. The consequences were soon seen in the Church services. The following is Cecil's description, addressed to the Queen, of what was prevalent:—"Some perform Divine service and prayers in the chancel, others in the body of the church; some in a seat made in the church; some in the pulpit with their faces to the people. Some keep precisely to the order of the book, others intermix psalms in metre; some officiate with a surplice, and others without it. In some places the table stands in the body of the church, in others it stands in the chancel; in some places it stands altarwise, distant from the wall a yard; in others it stands in the middle of the chancel, north and south; in some places the table is joined, in others it stands upon tressels; in some the table has a carpet, in others none. Some administer the communion with surplice and cap, some with surplice alone, some with neither; some with chalice, others with a communion-cup; some with unleavened bread, others with leavened; some receive kneeling, others standing, others sitting; some baptize in a font, others in a basin; some sign with the sign of a cross, others make no sign; some administer in a surplice, others without; some with a square cap, some with a round cap, some with a button cap, some with a hat, some in scholars' clothes, some in others." *

These differences in order were only indications of more radical differences, which found expression ere long as the Queen pressed on her measures for promoting uniformity.

Many of the bishops were returned exiles, and tinged

* Carwithen's *History of the Church of England*, ii. 67.

more or less with these views and practices. Pilkington, Bishop of Durham (1561–1575), sympathised to a considerable extent with the party who shrank from conforming to the ordinances of the Church of England; but he was willing himself to conform, although loth to enforce a rigid conformity on others.

The Dean of Durham, William Whittingham, was a very decided friend of nonconformity.* He was one of the translators of the Geneva Bible, and at Oxford, at Christ Church, had been a cotemporary of Gilpin. Ultimately he conformed, and when blamed by some of his friends for doing so, replied that he had heard John Calvin, who was his brother-in-law, say that "for external matters of order, they might not neglect their ministry, for so should they for tithing of mint neglect the greater things of the law." Other members of the chapter entertained similar views to those of the Dean, among whom I may mention John and Leonard Pilkington, brothers of the bishop; William Birch and Thomas Lever, both subsequently deprived for nonconformity; Thomas Sampson, one of Whittingham's colleagues in the translation of the Geneva Bible, and perhaps one or two others. These were not all cotemporary members of the chapter, but all were members between 1560 and 1567. It is plain

* Wood, Williams, *Whittingham*, and Sutton,
Valued the Prayer-Book not a button;
The Litany they grudged to say,
And threw the surplice quite away;
Alter'd confession, changed the hymns
For old Jack Hopkins' pithy rhymes.
Ward's *England's Reformation*, Canto i., p. 116.

Whittingham was one of the contributors to Sternhold and Hopkins' metrical, or so-called metrical, version of the Psalms.

then that the ideas learnt at Frankfort and Geneva were strongly represented among the influential clergy of the diocese of Durham.

Very strenuous measures were adopted for the enforcement of uniformity, and many recusants were deprived, the chapter suffering as we have already seen. But if uniformity was thereby to some extent secured, it was at the expense of the organisation of nonconforming bodies outside the pale of the Church, the members of which became not only more zealous opponents than ever of Episcopacy, of the English Liturgy, of the observance of festivals and holidays, of organs in churches, and of the special forms and ceremonies adopted in the Prayer-Book, than they had been before, but also creators of schism in the Church.

This division in the ranks of the Reformers naturally inspired the friends of Rome with hope, and probably had something to do with the Rebellion of 1569, of which more shortly.

As "a city set on a hill," Gilpin was sure to be an object of the proselytising efforts of the Puritans. He was "a burning and a shining light," whose fame was spread far and wide and his influence very great. A nobler quarry could hardly be found on which to expend their best energies. If Gilpin could be won, it was like taking a citadel; what further successes might not be anticipated? And then it was hoped that his opinions on Episcopacy were not very orthodox, as he had refused the bishopric of Carlisle, and it might be also anticipated that his sympathies were already, to a large extent, enlisted on the side of the dissidents. Was not the bishop, Pilkington, one of his most intimate friends?

And among the canons of Durham were not Birch, and especially Thomas Lever, among those whom he most affected?

Accordingly, Gilpin had not long to wait ere attempts were made to secure his adherence to the Puritan programme. But with no success: he gave them to understand that he was wholly dissatisfied with their proceedings, that religious controversies and dissensions were always exceedingly distasteful to him, that he was never a friend of change. As they soon learnt from him, "in his opinion the Reformation was just and necessary because great and essential questions were involved. But as things were now settled he saw no ground of dissatisfaction, and certainly none for another religious revolution. The Church of England, he thought, gave no reasonable ground of offence. Some things there might be which had been perhaps as well avoided, but to disturb the peace of a nation for trifles was, in his opinion, simply unchristian." This was the kind of language with which he met their overtures; and after this, it might be hoped that they would have been content to let him alone.

He was grieved at the heat of temper with which the Puritans propagated their opinions and treated their opponents. To his mind neither Episcopacy nor Presbyterianism, nor caps nor surplices, nor any external things, were half so important as peace and Christian charity.

But he was not yet given up as a hopeless case; and it shows the estimation in which he was held, that so much pains were taken to convert him. Accordingly,

one of the leading controversialists of the Puritan party came all the way from Cambridge to try his skill upon the rector of Houghton, and to make a proselyte of him, if that were possible.

This person, however, did his cause little credit. Vain and empty and self-sufficient, Gilpin, just the opposite himself, soon detected his weakness and declined discussion with him.

"There came unto Mr. Gilpin a certaine Cambridge man, who seemed a very great scholler, and hee dealt earnestly with Mr. Gilpin touching the discipline and reformation of the Church. Mr. Gilpin tould him that he could not allowe that an human invention should take place in the Church in stead of a divine institution. And how? Doe you thinke, saith the man, that this forme of discipline is an human invention? 'I am,' saith Mr. Gilpin, 'altogether of that mind. And as many as shall diligently have turned over the writings of the auncient fathers will be of mine opinion. I suspect that forme of discipline which appeareth not to have beene received in any auncient Church.' 'But yet,' saith the man, 'latter men doe see many things which those auncient fathers saw not: and the present Church seemeth better provided of many ingenious and industrious men.' Mr. Gilpin seemed somewhat mooved at that word, and replyed: 'I for my part do not hould the vertues of the latter men worthy to be compared to the infirmities of the fathers.' The other man made answer that he supposed Mr. Gilpin to be in an errour in that point. But Mr. Gilpin used these words purposely because he perceived that this fellow had a strong conceit of I know not what rare vertues in himselfe, which opinion Mr. Gilpin was desirous to roote out of him."

This champion appears to have reported that

Gilpin had said that "the virtues of the moderns were not equal even to the infirmities of the Fathers," and used this statement to bring him into disrepute. All that Gilpin had done was, as this quotation shows, in reply to his opponent, who had been running down the Fathers, and intimating, with a very intelligible application, that there were men in the present time far superior to them, to use some such words—meaning it of such moderns as the small individual who was conversing with him.

But every weapon in the armoury of the Puritan nonconformists must be tried ere Gilpin is to be despaired of. There was one left, and that must be brought into action. This was no less than one of Thomas Cartwright's works, possibly his *Admonition to the Parliament,* published in 1572; but the title of the book is not given either by Carlton or Gilpin. This book consists of twenty-three chapters, and comprehends all the matters of complaint which the Puritans were urging against the discipline of the Church.

Cartwright was the ablest of the advocates of the Puritan cause, and his defence of their positions it was hoped would prove unanswerable. It was therefore most important that Gilpin should have the book placed in his hands.*

* In rear of these fell Cartwright comes,
Beating with fist his pulpit drums,
Till Cambridge boys of all degrees,
For camlet coats left surplices;
And made 'em ready to dispute
For turning Prayer and prelates out.
Ward's *England's Reformation,* Canto iii., p. 23.

A copy was accordingly sent to him by his friend Dr. Birch, now no longer Canon of Durham, having been deprived in 1567. Dr. Birch desired Gilpin to read it over carefully, and to "be pleased to write backe his opinion concerning the same. Birch seemed to be somewhat in hast about the matter; for very shortly after he wrote againe to Mr. Gilpin, requesting him to send over his book with his opinion on it, before Mr. Gilpin had read it all over. Mr. Gilpin did accordingly send backe the booke and a letter to Mr. Birch, and as he had an excellent veine in versifying, in the end of the letter he wrote certaine verses, which are these that follow—

Multa quidem legi, sed plura legenda reliqui;
Posthac quum dabitur copia, cuncta legam;
Optant ut careat maculis ecclesia cunctis,
Præsens vita negat; vita futura dabit.

'Which verses of his,' says Carlton, 'I have thus Englished—

Much have I read, but more remaines behind,
I'le read the rest when I can leisure finde;
Men wish our church no blemish had at all,
It cannot be so heere, in heaven it shall.'"

It does not appear that the Puritans subsequently gave themselves any trouble about Bernard Gilpin. If they had understood the man better, the moderation of his views, his sense and shrewdness, and the long painful struggles through which he had passed ere he reached his present firm position, and had they considered his keen and enlightened perception of the proportions of things, they would probably never have approached him at all.

Gilpin was, however, fully alive to the merits of the Puritans; and, as we have seen, reckoned some of them among his most intimate friends, and was quite ready to acknowledge how much we owe to their principles.

They certainly did more than any other party to purge out of the kingdom the Popery which still lingered in its veins, and which without the application of a strong antidote would once more have penetrated to its vitals. To them we owe also the more decent and devout observance of Sunday. However narrow and hard in their creed and manners the Puritans might be, they were men of a sturdy Spartan type, ready to bear any amount of persecution, and to push through any difficulties. As Seebohm says—"The banishment of the Huguenots from France took away the backbone of her religious life. Scotland would not be what she is but for Knox and his parish schools, and England could not afford to lose the Puritan blood which mixes in her veins. New England owes a rich inheritance of stern virtues to her Pilgrim Fathers." *

Before leaving this subject, it is pleasant to note the reconciliation between Cartwright and Archbishop Whitgift in the old age of both. Whitgift had been Cartwright's most vigorous literary opponent thirty years before, nearly all his voluminous published works are in reply to Cartwright, and he had expelled him from Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1572. But in 1601 Whitgift, contrary to the Queen's wishes, showed Cartwright some favour, which the latter acknowledged in a letter dated March 24, 1601, to

* Seebohm's *Era of the Protestant Revolution*, p. 199.

"have proceeded from a frank disposition, without any desert of his own." And the biographer of Whitgift relates that when Cartwright "was freed from his troubles he often repaired to the archbishop, who used him kindly, and was contented to tolerate his preaching in Warwick divers years, upon his promise that he would not impugn the laws, orders, and government in this Church of England." Cartwright died about two months before Whitgift.*

It was this gentle brotherly spirit with which Gilpin could sympathise; Cartwright and Whitgift had been bitter opponents in former times, and were softened only in their old age into something like friendship, but Gilpin was always the same. He had really got to the core of the Gospel very early in his career, and understood that to "love one another" is the practice for which all doctrines exist, and without which they are of very small value.

As suggested just now, the schism arising out of the Puritan nonconformity may very probably have been a factor in the causes which produced the rising in the North of 1569; and it will be necessary to say something about this famous insurrection.

In the latter part of 1569, then, a rebellion broke out in the North of England, and the forces of progress and those of resistance to progress came for a short time into sharp collision.

There were two great parties in England: that of which Cecil, Lord Burleigh, was the head, who wished to see a general alliance of all the Reformed Churches of Europe, a determined opposition to the cruel persecu-

* Whitgift's Works, Parker Society, iii. p. xix.

tions of Alva in the Netherlands, and the surrender of Mary Queen of Scots to her subjects for the punishment which she deserved at their hands; and the Romish party, headed by the Duke of Norfolk, who it was reported was to marry Mary of Scotland, and backed by the majority of the *laudatores temporis acti*, who desired the dismissal of all Protestants from the Queen's Council, peace with Spain, and the recognition of the succession of the Scottish Queen to the throne of England. Rarely, perhaps, have political parties been so radically opposed to each other: few persons can have had much hesitation as to the side to take when the respective policies were fully stated. Probably, however, this clear outlining of policies is a privilege which after generations enjoy rather than those immediately concerned.

Between the two parties, Elizabeth, as usual, temporised. At last the patience of the Romish party was exhausted, and in a hurry and without any adequate preparation—in fact, the Queen had forced their hands—the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland raised the standard of revolt.

They surprised and seized Barnard Castle, and then marched to Durham.

In their proclamations the leaders announced themselves as "the Queen's most trewe and lawful subjects," and declared that they were banded together for the restoration of the "trewe and Catholicke religion." The ignorant people, still hankering after the old faith, were easily misled by these professions, and if they did not flock in very large numbers to the standard, at all events sympathised and helped in other

ways. The rising was purely Romanist, and only as such was popular.

When the rebels arrived at Durham, no time was lost in re-establishing the Mass in the cathedral; and altars were set up, and Bibles, Prayer-Books, and homilies, &c., destroyed and burnt in the city churches, and in those of the neighbouring parishes, such as Pittington, Sherburn, Sedgefield, Auckland, Long Newton, Billingham, Stockton, &c. Clergymen, churchwardens, and others, lent not always an unwilling hand in this work, creating subsequently much business for the ecclesiastical courts at Durham.

This rebellion developed both among priests and people a very large amount of hitherto to some extent latent disaffection to the reformed faith.

One of the canons of the cathedral, George Cliffe, appointed in 1558, most probably under the old *régime*, attended the Roman Catholic services in the cathedral several times "in the queir, in his habit." He excused himself afterwards that during these services he was "aither redinge of his Testament or holdinge talke with one or other."

Several of the minor canons went further, and were reconciled to the Church of Rome. One of them pleaded afterwards that "he was a simple man and easye to be seduced;" another that it was "against his will and for feir of his lyffe;" another that he "dyd yt by compulcion."* But the defections of the clergy were not all on these grounds, or "by compulcion"—

* See *Depositions and Ecclesiastical Proceedings from the Courts of Durham*, p. 137, 139, 145, 149, 174, 198. Published by the Surtees Society.

e.g. "Sir John Browne of Wilton Gilbert honestly renounced not only his Reformed teaching of the past, but also his living;" and another parish clergyman, one "parson Plombtree," openly joined the rebels. He was afterwards taken and convicted by due form of law and executed.* Clearly at this date the Reformation had small hold in these Northern parts, and had this rebellion proved successful, little difficulty would have been experienced in setting up the old order of things again. Bishop Ridley's criticism "of the most part of the clergy," that "they were never persuaded in their hearts, but only from the teeth forward," would apply very generally to the rank and file of the Durham clergy in 1569. †

The cry of the rebel leaders which touched the heart of the people was that they intended "to reduce all causes of religion to the old custom and usage." ‡ Among those who joined them were some of the men of Tynedale and Readsdale, and none of the people of these dales could be depended upon for the Queen's cause. §

However, the storm broke as rapidly as it had gathered; it was all over in little more than a month; *i.e.* by the latter part of December 1569. The mass of the Roman Catholics throughout the country made no sign, and the movement quickly collapsed. It was a movement, as Sir Cuthbert Sharp || says, "begun without foresight, conducted without energy, and ending in dastardly and inglorious flight."

* Sharp's *Memorials of the Rebellion of* 1569, p. 188.
† Ridley's *Works*, p. 59.
‡ Sharp's *Memorials of the Rebellion of* 1569, p. 42.
§ Sharp, pp. 40, 68. || Sharp, p. xix.

The rebellion quelled, the day of vengeance came. About six hundred persons were executed, mostly of the "poore sorte," the policy being on the one hand to create terror in the minds of the people, and on the other not to execute property owners, at least in the county Palatine of Durham, because their property would be forfeited by law to the Bishop of Durham and not to the Crown.*

A letter from the Earl of Sussex to Sir George Bowes,† who was the Queen's Commissioner for punishing the rebels, dated January 6, 1570, contains some curious information about this "reign of terror."

The Earl suggests that the number of "examples in Rypon and Tadcaster" should be "grete," *i.e.* that

* Sharp's *Memorials*, p. 122.

† The following letter from the Earl of Sussex to Sir George Bowes, dated January 10, 1570, I print without note or comment :—

"SIR GEORGE BOWES,—I have sett the nombers to be executed in every toune, under the name of every toune, which draweth nere to two hundred; wherein you maye use your dyscretion in takying more or less in every toune as you shall see juste cause for the offences and fitness for example, so as in the hole you passe not of all kynd of such, the nomber of two hundred; amongst whom you maye not execute any that hathe freholds, or noted welthye; for so is the Queen's Majestie's plesier, by her specyall commandment. T. SUSSEX."

This letter refers to Richmond and Richmondshire, and the following is the table :—

Joined the Rebels in	Gilling West	141	To be executed		30
,, ,,	Haug East	241	,,	,,	42
,, ,,	Hauge West	293	,,	,,	47
,, ,,	Haly Keld	341	,,	,,	57
,, ,,	Gilling East	225	,,	,,	37
	Total number of rebels	1241.	To be executed		213
	Serving men to be executed in Richmondshire				18
			Total to be executed		231

there should be numerous executions in these towns, I presume as being important towns and so "y^t^ you find not suffycyent numbers within the tounes that be in the doings of the late (rebellion) take of other tounes, and bryng them to the executyon to those places." He also urges Bowes "to use expedytyon," because the Queen was complaining of the long time, and desiring the expenses to be reduced; and states that he is "dayly trobled with sutes for staye of suche as be appoynted to be executed." And so the work went on as quickly as possible. Half a dozen here, a score there, done to death, until the tale reached something like six hundred.*

Bowes declared some years after this massacre that "he executed none but such as confessed that they had been in actual rebellion two days at least after the expiration of the first pardon," † and he says, in a letter to the Earl of Sussex, written from Darlington on January 8, 1570, when his hands were red with the blood he was shedding like water, "I have taken such order with thes that dealeth with the goods of those executed, that they showld deale favorable with the wyfes and children, so that they might onely not have cause to complaine, but be satisfyed." There was then some little mercy in all this wrath, possibly due to the intervention of Gilpin, of which more anon.

When this rebellion broke out, bishops and clergy who would not swim with the stream were in great peril. Bishop Pilkington, who as being a married bishop was specially obnoxious, narrowly escaped with

* Sharp's *Memorials*, p. 153, 160.
† Sharp's *Memorials*, p. 155.

his life; he fled to the south, according to Fuller, "with his wife and infant daughter, in the disguise of beggars."

Subsequently the Bishop, writing to Cecil on January 4, 1570, says "the cuntrie is in grete misere, and as the shireff writes he cannot doe justice bi ani number off juries, off such as be untouched in this rebellion, unto their auther quited by law or pardoned bi the Q. Mtie.;" and he continues, "The number of offendors is so grete that few innocent are left to trie the giltie; and iff the forfeited landes be bestowed on such as be straungers, and will not dwell in the cuntre, the people shall be without heades, the cuntre deserte;" a plea this no doubt for the forfeitures being left to the Bishop in right of the palatinate.

Although few persons of property had been executed, the forfeited properties were very large; but the Queen seized them, despite of the legal right of the Bishop; Pilkington sued the Queen, but in vain, for restitution.

As regards Gilpin's action at this period the following particulars are from Carlton's quaint pages.

He begins—"When we were children," referring to his boyhood at Houghton School, "a rebellion was raised in the north by the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, which Mr. Gilpin perceived beforehand by certaine evident signes."

Gilpin was never a man to incur a useless and unnecessary danger. While he shrank from no duty and would risk everything, even life, rather than flinch when a really important interest was at stake, he had

* Bishop Pilkington's *Werks*, p. ix.

all the prudence and perception of the fitness of things which made it impossible for him to be foolhardy or rash. Accordingly at this time, knowing that he would be a marked man and what he might expect from the excited and ignorant hordes, who composed the rank and file of the rebel forces, he took the opportunity to make his annual visit to Oxford, thus quietly withdrawing from an unnecessary risk and performing his usual duty to his scholars at the university. Before leaving, however, he assembled his school, and "made a speech to the maisters and schollers, that they should demeane themselves carefully and peaceably until his returne."

From Durham some of the rebels found their way to Houghton, only six miles off. "There they found Mr. Gilpin's barnes full of corne, young cattel ready fatted, and many things provided for hospitalities; but they made waste of all, selling the corne, consuming the fatted ware, and basely making havocke of all those things which Mr. Gilpin had provided for pious and honest uses. There was among them one fellow whom Mr. Gilpin had sometimes saved from the gallows, and this knave was the wickedest of all the rest in rioting away Mr. Gilpin's goods."

With the approach of an army under the Earl of Sussex, the rebels, without offering any resistance, threw down their arms and ran away.

"After they were put to flight," says Carlton, and, as we have already noted, "there was sharp and cruell proceedings by Sir George Bowes against the simpler sort, whom the rebels had draune to their faction under

* Sharp's *Memorials*, p. 163.

pretence of serving the Queene—proceedings more sharp than fitting." Bowes had suffered severely in his property himself—to the extent of about £4000, he says, "his chief house defaced, and nothing left him in house or grounds; stuff, corn, and cattle all gone, only his children left."

"Gilpin, who was now come home again" to Houghton only to find the ruin and havoc the rebels had made in his house and goods, and therefore, like Bowes, a sufferer too, "was grieved most at hearing how severely the poor people were being dealt with, and begged the lives of many by his intercession, for hee knew well enough that many men were draune, as it were, into the snare, not wilfully, but through ignorance, and through the fraudulent practises of others."

Persuaded by what he said, according to William Gilpin, Sir George adopted more merciful measures.*

The disastrous issue of this northern rebellion, and, as is asserted on excellent authority, † the absolute refusal of the Queen to acknowledge the papal supremacy was the occasion of the famous Roman Bull already referred to, which declared Elizabeth excommunicated, and deposed her from the throne—a Bull which led to very severe measures against the Roman Catholics, and to the withdrawal of such of them as had hitherto attended more or less regularly the Anglican services. ‡

* *Gilpin's Life*, p. 147.

† See Bishop Babington on Numbers vii., and other authorities in Blunt's *Heresies*, &c.: article, "Roman Catholicism."

‡ See Fuller's *Church History*, ii. p. 565.

Up to this time there were many, at least on the Roman side, with the Pope at their head, who had not utterly abandoned the hope that some terms of compromise might still be arranged, and that England might still remain a spiritual vassal to Rome—many who, in common with the Pope, who was quite ready to give his approval to the Prayer Book if his supremacy was conceded, would have gladly welcomed any possible conditions for an unbroken communion. The Papal supremacy was the crucial question from the Papal point of view, and as long as there was the most desperate hope of conceding this, the orders from Rome were not absolutely uncompromising; but when all hope of that was gone, then came the decree of excommunication and deposition, which made the breach impossible to fill up. The date of this decree is 1571, and it is of course an important date in the history of the Churches of Rome and England, and neither the occasion nor the side from which it came should be forgotten.

CHAPTER XII.

GILPIN'S HOME AND FRIENDS.

DURING Gilpin's incumbency, Houghton Rectory was much frequented by distinguished and literary persons, whose company he was glad to have, and who were always glad to see and converse with him.

Thus, affairs of state having on one occasion brought Lord Burleigh, Elizabeth's great Minister, into that neighbourhood, he resolved on paying a visit to the Rector of Houghton. The Lord Treasurer came without notice and with a considerable retinue; this was rather hard upon his host, but apparently could not be avoided.

The economy, however, of such a plentiful house as Gilpin kept could not easily be overtaxed, and he received his guest with a hearty welcome, and entertained him and his retinue generously and handsomely, so that, as they said afterwards, "they could not have expected more at Lambeth."

Lord Burleigh took careful note of the order and regularity which prevailed in the house. There was a large resident household; and it was also continually crowded with all kinds of persons, gentlemen, farmers, poor people, who had come for various purposes; yet

there was no confusion, no hurry, no ill temper—the utmost simplicity and courtesy of manners prevailed, and all were cheerful. It is astonishing how much a bright temper in the head of a house spreads through all the family. Houghton Rectory was indeed a calm and happy retreat, and might well excite the envy of one whose lot was cast in the great world of state.

With great reluctance Lord Burleigh left this pleasant home, and as he said "good-bye" to Gilpin, told him that "he had heard much in his commendation, but had now seen what far exceeded all that he had heard," adding, that "if he could ever be of any service he might always be depended on."

When he reached Rainton Hill on his departure, which is about a mile from Houghton and commands a fine view of the church, rectory, and town, he turned his horse to take one last view of the place, and after gazing some time said: "There is the enjoyment of life indeed; who can blame that man for not accepting a bishopric? What doth he want to make him greater, or happier, or more useful to mankind?"

The materials are scanty indeed for recalling in imagination something of the life at Houghton Rectory in Gilpin's time; how the day went on from morning to night. If I make the attempt, it must be with an antecedent claim for a ready forgiveness if details are necessarily very limited, and if I seem too hasty in my assumptions or too ready to draw inferences from slight premises.

From the head of the house downwards we may be sure that early rising prevailed; by seven o'clock in the morning the schoolboys had to be off to school, break-

fastless, I presume; breakfast, if contemplated at all, seems from the statutes to have been only a snatch-meal, and eleven o'clock the hour of the first regular sit-down meal. It was not likely that Bernard Gilpin would let them leave his roof without family prayers and his blessing, and so he was doubtless up and stirring about, winter and summer, among the earliest.

There were generally, besides the family, the servants, and the schoolboys, twenty or so of these last, guests staying in the house, and the first assembly of the household at family prayers must have formed a largish congregation. Davenant's Rectory had a chapel; I don't know about Gilpin's, but it is not at all unlikely that his had one also.

Then the work of the day commenced—

"Upstairs and downstairs, and in the Rector's chamber."

It was a house in which order and system were paramount; a time for everything, and everything at its time; a place for everything, and everything in its place. Every one knew his or her own duty, and did it. All were busy and cheerful, and there was no confusion or disorder, and angry words would be rarely heard.

There was plenty of work for every one to do; none need sit with their hands before them. And pervading the whole atmosphere of the house there was a certain sense of quietness and sanctity which is rarely met with, and then only in the homes of the best men and women. The spirit and the habits of the master infected the whole household, from the cook in the

kitchen to the maid in the attic. Lord Burleigh, as noted just now, was particularly struck by the beautiful order and calmness of the rectory.

Meanwhile Gilpin's own sanctum (was it the parlour memorable later on for an interview with Bishop Barnes?) would be invaded by a large number of visitors, come to him on all sorts of parish and other business. Here was a poor man sorely pressed to make all ends meet, and wanting a little help; here another, touched by some recent sermon, or under great affliction, and needing spiritual advice; here a little company come to get their differences settled, and to have the Rector's verdict on some, to them, knotty and difficult point; and here again perhaps some friend or guest arrived, or on the point of leaving; and in the midst Gilpin, with his calm, benevolent face and gentle and affectionate tone and manner, dispensing to all severally as they needed.

Soon after a class of boys would come in from school to go through one of their lessons with the Rector, or to receive religious instruction or advice from him. This over, it might be about eleven o'clock, when all the household assembled in the hall to dinner, seated at three tables according to their rank. Here there was abundance, but no luxury; all things good but plain, everything clean, and the conversation "good to the use of edifying."

A daily office was to send out broth to a number of poor pensioners on the bounty of the house; and if it was Thursday, large supplies of meat were also thus dispensed; then doubtless the sick would have their special wants attended to. And the whole domestic staff

of the rectory were in this way employed as almoners and ministers to the necessities of the poor.

Dinner over, back the boys trooped to school, which began again at one o'clock, while Gilpin himself might go to inspect the works which were almost always going on either at rectory or school. "The buildings and reparations of this wide house," he once wrote, "will never have an end." And then he would be visiting his people in Houghton, or the horse was ordered, for which his faithful relative, friend and servant, William Airy, would be in requisition; and Gilpin rode forth, North, South, East or West, over his wide parish, calling at this or that village or hamlet or farm-house, and lighting up every place he came to with his own bright spirit and wise kindness. Sometimes doubtless his errand was to good Mrs. Bellasis at Morton House to discuss some project of mercy, sometimes to see Mr. Lever at Sherburn, John Heath at Kepier, or any other friend, and occasionally he made it his business to run over to Durham, or to Wearmouth, or to Sunderland, or elsewhere.

At or about five in winter, and six in summer, the next meal of the day took place, and again the household assembled at table.

The rule of Houghton Rectory was, we need not question—

> "Early to bed and early to rise
> Makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise."

It was a household one of the conditions of which was the strictest economy; no waste was tolerated, neither of materials, nor indeed of time. So much

was possible because the most was made of everything.

When you entered the door of Houghton Rectory you were conscious at once of something in the whole atmosphere of the place which told of quiet energy and unruffled order. Many people coming and going made no disorder; the roughest and most untutored persons coming there became more quiet than anywhere else.

And yet you may be sure it was a pleasant house for children. Gilpin valued children and loved them, and they loved him. It was a place, too, which poor people were never afraid of visiting; Gilpin had constituted himself "the common father of the poor." Moreover, it was such a house as the most polished, learned, and serious entered always with delight; for the master of that rectory was one whose conversation was always valuable and enlightened, and savoured with godliness. So much for the house. While the master of the house, going about Houghton and its outlying villages, carried with him wherever he came that odour of sanctity and spirit of divine love and tender sympathy and wise discretion which had become his second nature.

Imagine all this in a community far below the average of the England of those days in enlightenment and civilisation, and we can understand something of the mighty influence Gilpin wielded, and of the immense work for God which he was enabled to do.

"All men counted" Bernard "that he was a saint indeed," and when travelling was very difficult, and locomotion therefore infinitely less common than now,

when there were no newspapers nor telegraphs, nor post-offices, and fame took much longer to travel than it does in these days, his reputation was extended from the Tweed to the Thames, and in most parts of England men talked about Bernard Gilpin with a faint reflection of the affectionate regard and respect in which he was held at every fireside in Houghton, and by squire as well as peasant.

Some details about Gilpin's friends may be interesting. It was true that "all good men were his friends," but I am thinking of his intimate friends.

We have had many opportunities of observing Bishop Tunstall's affection for and intimacy with his great-nephew. After Tunstall's deprivation in July 1559, the see was vacant for about eighteen months. James Pilkington succeeded to the bishopric in 1561, and in him Gilpin found a man with whom he could establish a very close and warm friendship. Their dispositions were in many respects very similar; their religion of the same godly stamp; in age there was little difference, Gilpin being three years the elder, and both were men of learning.

The Bishop was a frequent visitor at Houghton Rectory, and Gilpin as often at Auckland; many a pious scheme they discussed together, and indeed walked in the house of God as friends.

Pilkington may not have been a model bishop, as Gilpin was a model parson of a parish, but he was a good man, and was trying to be faithful in his great charge. He had not, however, the strength of character which Gilpin possessed, and his sympathies were more with the Puritans than those of Gilpin were.

Strype describes him as "the good old Bishop of Durham, a grave and truly reverend man of great piety and learning, and such frugal simplicity of life as well became a modest Christian prelate." Strype need not have described him as "old;" he was only fifty-five when he died, and possibly Queen Elizabeth, with whom Pilkington had a suit about the forfeited estates of the 1569 rebels, would have demurred to the commendation of his "simplicity," and yet he was only defending the legal rights of the see, a duty he owed to the Church and to his successors as well as to himself. When the Queen heard that he had endowed his daughters with very large fortunes on their marriage, she at once took away £1000 a year from his bishopric, and it is not unlikely that Elizabeth would have also disputed the correctness of the term "frugal" and applied another; but we will hope and believe that either royal demurrer was causeless.*

It is greatly to this bishop's credit, and disposes us to judge him favourably, that he was capable of thoroughly appreciating Gilpin, and that there was such a close friendship between the two men. Like cleaves to like, and in no respect is this more true than in friendships between men of mature years.

Pilkington was much interested in Gilpin's labours in Tynedale and Redesdale, and marked his sense of the importance of this work by remitting all visitation fees to him at his first visitation; he was also an admiring observer of his labours in founding the Grammar School, which doubtless the two friends

* Cf. Fuller's *Church History*, Book V., Century xvi., c. 55, Vol. II. pp. 147, 583.

often inspected together. Apparently it was Gilpin's example that induced him to found a similar school at his native place, Rivington in Lancashire, and the statutes of which he submitted to Gilpin for revision, as already stated.

In the death of Bishop Pilkington, which happened in 1575, Gilpin lost his best and most intimate friend; probably he would say of him in the words of the Poet Laureate—

"After him no other friend."

It was indeed hardly probable that a man standing so distinctly head and shoulders above his fellows should make many close friendships; it was only occasionally that Gilpin could meet with any one between whom and himself there could be enough common ground to make a near friendship possible; this is one of the penalties of moral and spiritual greatness.

A curious letter is extant, dated September 22, 1573, in which Pilkington begs through Lord Burleigh the Queen's permission "to come into these southern parts for the avoiding the extremity of the winter season:" he speaks of "the common griefs that he had suffered in the north for several winters past." If this request were not granted, he could console himself with the reflection, as he writes, that "there is a highway to heaven out of all countries, of which free passage, I praise God, I doubt not." *

Among the appointments to canonries of Durham

* Hutchinson's *History of Durham*, i. 561, and Pilkington's *Works*, iv.

which are due to Bishop Pilkington was that of John Foxe the martyrologist, who was made canon in 1572.

The years of Pilkington's episcopacy, that is from 1561 to 1575, were in many respects halcyon years for Gilpin, years during which he was in his full vigour for active work, and when in the chief pastor of the diocese he had an ever-sympathising friend, adviser, and supporter. The death of Pilkington and the accession of Barnes to the bishopric meant, at least for some time, a change in his relations to his diocesan, which Gilpin must have felt keenly.

Among less close intimacies that with Thomas Lever must be recorded. Lever was "a godly and learned man," a Master of Sherburn Hospital latterly. He had been a Canon of Durham (1563–7), but was deprived by Elizabeth in 1567 for non-conformity. He was not an extreme man, although decidedly favouring the Puritan views; these sympathies, however, never interfered with Gilpin's friendship. Surtees describes him as "an eloquent preacher and a sincere professor of the true religion, which varies little in essentials with the varieties of form and habit, *virtutum in omni mansuetudine semitator*.*

Lever was one of the Marian exiles, and before he left England had been a preacher at St. Paul's Cross; some of his sermons preached there are extant, and are not unlike Latimer's in their simple and conversational tone.†

Abroad he had contracted a friendship with Bullinger and attended the ministry of Calvin. Returning to

* Surtees' *History of Durham*, i., 141.

† Blunt's *History of the Reformation*, p. 176.

England, he was for some time at Coventry, whence he was summoned to a canonry at Durham in 1562 by Bishop Pilkington.

It was on Lever's suggestion that Queen Elizabeth refused the title of "Supreme Head of the Church;" Bishop Sandys mentions this in a letter to Archbishop Parker, saying that Lever "wisely put such a scruple in the Queen's head" that she would not have it.*

Among his other near friends must be reckoned the Bellasis family, and Mr. John Heath of Kepier; but I have alluded to these already.

The years we are passing under review were busy ones for Gilpin, and doubtless, as already suggested, for the most part very happy ones, and each of them adding to his fame and influence. It was in this period that the Grammar School was built, established, endowed, and chartered, and several successions of pupils passed through it, and that his missionary journeys were planned and regularly carried out each in their due season, winter time, as we have seen, being reserved for Tynedale and Readsdale; among his annual engagements was a visit to Oxford, to exercise a fatherly supervision over his students resident there.

Houghton of course always stood first among the objects of his care, and he took all possible precautions that his parish should not suffer by his absence.

Gilpin rode a great deal, and thus was able to cover much ground month by month; probably he did not equal Wesley's 4000 miles a year; but he could move more rapidly from place to place than we readily believe when we consider only the badness of the roads

* *Correspondeuce of Archbishop Parker*, p. 66.

in those days, and do not consider the excellence of his cattle, and the stout, resolute, and cheerful heart he bore.

Per contra, it was during this period that the proselytising efforts of the Puritans somewhat worried him. The "Rising in the North" must have been a great distress; doubtless, also, he had his own share of the ordinary vexations of life, and more than the usual share of the anxieties and cares of a wide and populous parish. But with large-hearted cheerfulness, and with a deep awe of God, and a full sense of responsibility, he was glad and successful in his work, and found himself, at least during most of these years, endowed with powers of mind which commanded respect, and with physical powers which enabled him to do most of what was in his heart.

No life is so happy as that of the man who knows his duty and takes it as given to him by God, and finds that he is gifted with the power to do it, and sees day by day at least some blessing on his labours.

In 1564 the plague was in Houghton. During its severity Gilpin accepted the hospitality of a Mr. Lisle at Biddick Hall, about two and a half miles away. At a somewhat later date a terrible pestilence broke out in Oxford; it was traced to a gaol infection which tainted the court during the assizes, to open the prison doors then was often to let out horrible plagues. The following letter from one of Gilpin's students draws a shocking picture of its ravages:—

"The terrible distemper among us, of which you have undoubtedly heard, hath made it indeed a dreadful time to us. During the first six days there died ninety-five; seventy

of whom were scholars. This is not conjecture, but appears from the mayor's list. The infection does not confine itself to the town, but begins to spread in the country; where, if our accounts are true, it hath carried off numbers of people: amongst them poor Mr. Roberts. Those who are seized with it, are in the utmost torment: their bowels are burnt up: they call earnestly for drink: they cannot bear the touch of clothes: they entreat the standers-by to throw cold water upon them: sometimes they are quite mad; rise upon their keepers; run naked out of their houses; and often endeavour to put an end to their lives.—The physicians are confounded, declaring they have met with nothing similar, either in their reading or practice. Yet many of them give this distemper a name, though they have done nothing to show they are at all acquainted with its nature. The greater part of them, I am told, have now left the town, either out of fear for themselves, or conscious that they can do no good.—This dreadful distemper is now generally attributed to some jail infection, brought into court at the assizes: for it is remarkable that the first infected were those only who had been there.—Few women or old men have died.—God be thanked, the rage of this pestilence is now much abated. It is still among us in some degree, but its effects appear every day weaker."

The plague was a not uncommon visitor at Houghton; it was there about eighteen months before Gilpin's death, and possibly on other unrecorded occasions during his incumbency.

And no wonder! In those days sanitary science was unknown, and boards of health and sanitary inspectors undreamed of. Houses were built according to the pleasure of their builders, streets were narrow, ventilation was unheeded, the floors of rooms were covered with filthy rushes, often unchanged for years,

and the personal habits of the people were far from cleanly. In the Rivington School statutes,* for example, very minute directions are given to the boys about getting up in the mornings, but to "wash their hands" is all the washing required. In fact, pestilence had it all its own way, and in presence of the plague people did not know what to do; their only resource was flight, if that were possible. We may be thankful our lot is fallen in better times.

An incident which perhaps is to be referred to the Episcopate of Pilkington must, if I am correct in this supposition, be recorded here, as it shows the extreme sensitiveness of Gilpin's conscience. There was something which he had done or omitted to do in his parish which greatly distressed his mind. His conscience reproved him so sharply that he could find no ease. He therefore resolved on laying the matter before his bishop, and, if the bishop so decided, to give up his living or to submit to any censure that might be imposed. Without this he declared that he could never recover his peace of mind.

We have no means of knowing what this omission or commission was; the bishop, as in duty bound, seems never to have divulged it, and only one other friend ever knew, who also preserved silence on the matter as Gilpin requested him to do. Neither have we any satisfactory means of determining the time when Gilpin wrote to the bishop and his friend on the subject. My reason for thinking it was during Pilkington's Episcopate may be a good one or a bad one, but it is the only clue I can find; it is that Gilpin in one clause

* *Rivington Statutes*, p. 18.

seems to imply that the bishop might be "pained with sickness," which was more likely to apply to Bishop Pilkington, who suffered from bad health, than to Bishop Barnes.

The following is the letter which Gilpin wrote to his friend, enclosing one to the bishop:—

"Grace and peace in Christ Jesus: if any man be vexed in body or mind, you know it is a very grievous thing to have no comforter: which hath constrained me to disclose unto you (not doubting but to have both your comfort and help, and to have it kept most secret) that thing, which, besides to you, I never opened to any living creature. In this enclosed letter I have opened my grief and weakness of conscience unto my Lord; beseeching you, if opportunity will serve, to deliver it. Howbeit, if either he should be pained with sickness, or you would first by writing that I should have your advice, or you see any other cause why to stay the delivery, I refer all to your wisdom. But if you have opportunity to my lord, I hope by you to know speedily some part of his pleasure. I trust, my case weighed, he will rather think me to be pitied than had in hatred. How tender a thing conscience is, I have found by too good experience. I have found, moreover, that as it is easily wounded, so it is with difficulty healed. And for my own part, I speak from my heart, I would rather be often wounded in my body, than once in my mind. Which things considered, I trust you will bear with my weakness. But you may object, I have continued weak very long; which fault certainly I find with myself: but for this I accuse my own slowness both in study and prayer; which by God's grace, as far as my weak body will serve, hereafter shall be amended; for certainly those two are the chief instruments whereby I have sure trust that God of his goodness will make me strong."

We are left almost as much in the dark as to the effect produced on the bishop's mind by the disclosure which Gilpin had made, but this we do know, there was no resignation of his living and no censure, and that the worthy and conscientious Rector of Houghton fully recovered his peace of mind.

By the date of Pilkington's death, namely 1575, Gilpin had been upwards of eighteen years at Houghton, and was himself fifty-eight years old. He was a bachelor, but a bachelor who was by no means opposed to the marriage of clergymen, indeed one of the articles charged against him before Bishop Bonner had been that he favoured such marriages.

Although he had neither wife nor children of his own, no man was more fatherly in his relations with the young nor undertook a larger responsibility for them.

In those days it seems to have been a common thing for relatives to become servants to relatives; Bishop Barnes had for his servant Edward Brakinbury, his "kinsman;"* and Gilpin's most faithful servant and attendant was William Airy, also a kinsman. Between master and servant there appears to have been a very close confidence and friendship; part of the school property Gilpin conveyed to Airy in trust for the school, and for twenty-seven years at least the bond lasted between them, continuing up to Gilpin's death. Airy was almoner and steward as well as attendant on the rector, and if "like master like man" be true, there must have been much that was amiable, godly, and noble in William Airy.

* *Parker Correspondence*, p. 392.

CHAPTER XIII.

EPISCOPATE OF RICHARD BARNES.

TWO years elapsed after the death of Bishop Pilkington ere a successor assumed the government of the diocese of Durham.

It was in April 1577 that Richard Barnes became bishop. He was appointed through the influence of Lord Burleigh, and it is averred that one of the conditions of his appointment was that he should "be a watch on the messengers from Scotland to Queen Mary." His letter of thanks to his patron, dated from Rose Castle, March 23, 1576, implies that he had some special duty to perform, and is in other respects not a very creditable document as coming from a bishop in regard to his translation to a new see.*

Barnes does not seem to have taken kindly to the Durham portion of his diocese. In a letter to Lord Burleigh he says, "The people of Northumberland are far more pliable to all good order than these stubborn churlish people of the county of Durham, and their neighbours of Richmondshire, who show but, as the proverb is, Jack of Nape's charity in their hearts. The customes of the lives of this people, as their country is, is truly savage." He then speaks of the effect produced

* Hutchinson's *History of Durham*, i. 566.

by his own "threatening," "which hath wrought *pannicum timorem* in their minds, and in the clergy a good readiness to apply their travells to their calling." "But," he continues, "that *augie stabulum* the Church at Durham exceeds; whose stink is grievous in the nose of God and men, and which to purge far passeth Hercules' labours." *

While the Bishop entertained such sentiments towards his people, it was not to be expected that his influence in the diocese would be salutary; and we are not surprised that he should have to complain, as he does here, of "slanders, false reports, and shameless lies" against himself.

Barnes did not approach his Durham work with a full share of that *élan* and elasticity which carry a man over difficulties and ensure success, and unfortunately he was accompanied by his brother John, who was hardly the best adviser and right-hand man he could have had; perhaps he might rather be described as his evil genius.

Fuller says of the Bishop, "He was one commendable in himself, but much suffering from the corruption and viciousness of his brother, whom he had made rector of Haughton-le-Skerne." The Bishop had evidently some zeal for the interests of the diocese. Two of his measures were decidedly judicious. He arranged a system of examining the clergy every year in their knowledge of Scripture, a system already noticed (see p. 85); and he mapped out the diocese into districts, and assigned certain of the ablest clergymen in each district, himself taking part in the scheme, to visit the

* Hutchinson's *History of Durham*, i. 570.

churches and preach therein, so that at least one good sermon a month was ensured in every parish not well supplied with preachers. Gilpin was one of those whom the Bishop thus employed, and in 1578 he was appointed to preach once in the following churches—Chester-le-Street, Monkwearmouth, Bishopwearmouth, Easington, Dalton-le-Dale, Witton Gilbert, Lanchester, St. Nicholas', Newcastle, Pittington, and Billingham.*

It was scarcely to be expected that the friendship of Gilpin for Pilkington should, all things considered, be extended to his successor—in fact, there were persons and circumstances which for a time produced unpleasant relations between the Bishop and the Rector, which only lasted, however, for a limited time.

Allusion has already been made in an earlier chapter to the zeal wherewith Gilpin undertook the cause of the oppressed. This zeal brought him into collision with John Barnes, and soon the Rector of Houghton, as *advocatus oppressorum;* became a perpetual "thorn in the flesh" to the Rector of Haughton-le-Skerne. Stern, however, as Gilpin was in rebuking Barnes' evil deeds, and unbending in demanding justice and mercy, he always wrote in a mild and even affectionate manner to him. The following is an extract from a letter in which he had pleaded the cause of three orphans unjustly defrauded of their patrimony:—

"It will be but a few years before you and I must give up our great accounts. I pray God give us both the grace to have them in constant readiness. And may you take what I have written in as friendly a

* *Injunctions of Bishop Barnes*, published by the Surtees Society, p. 83.

manner as it is meant. My daily prayers are made for you to Almighty God, whom I beseech evermore to preserve you."

Subsequently Gilpin seems to have suffered himself from the unjust conduct of Barnes, and the following letters were written under such circumstances :—

"Right worshipful, after my due commendations: these are to certify you, that my curate paying for me at the last visitation forty-six shillings, paid more than he ought to have done, by about a noble. As for the money, I speak not: I pray God that it may do my lord much good. But I should be very sorry, that through my default it should remain an everlasting burthen to my successors. Wherefore I beseech you let it not be made a precedent; and for my time, if I live till the next visitation, which I look not for, I will not refuse to pay it no more than I do now, so that care be taken my successors pay no more after me than that which is due, which I take to be fourpence for every pound in the queen's majesty's books.—But you say I must needs pay it, and my successors also, because it is found in a certain rate-book of bishop Pilkington. As for that I am able to say, and I trust I can bring witness, that bishop Pilkington, at his first visitation, clearly forgave me all the sum, in consideration, as I was told, of my travel in Northumberland; and after that, at his other two visitations, I made no let, but suffered his officers just to take what they would. But my trust is, that your worship will not burthen my successors for this my simplicity or folly, term it what you will.—Seeing, then, that I have so much reason, they do me wrong who say I wrangled at the last visitation: for God is my witness, I love not differences of any kind.—I pray God to have you in his blessed keeping.

"Yours to his power,

"BERNARD GILPIN."

"I marvel, Mr. Barns, that you should use me in this manner, I seeking and studying to use you well in all things.—About two or three years ago, at my lord's visitation, when you took of others a groat in the pound (as you can take no more) you made me pay above my due; for the which if I had sought remedy by the statute against extortion, I trust the statute would have stood for me.—After that, the subsidy being gathered, my servant, by oversight, not examining carefully the book, paid a certain sum that was not due, I think it was about twenty shillings; but sure I could never get it restored to this day.—Now, you seek unjustly to charge my living for my curate; which, seeing it hath never been demanded before, some will think you seek it for you own purse. I pay unto the Queen's majesty (God save her grace) as duly, and with as good a will as any subject, twenty-three pounds twelve shillings by the year. But if you still continue resolved to charge me with this six pounds, I promise you, before I pay it, I will spend five marks in defence of my right.—But I trust after good advisement you will let this new suit drop. I pray God Almighty to keep you evermore.

"Your loving friend to his power,

"BERNARD GILPIN."

Possibly these letters were written after the affair at Chester-le-Street, which we shall come to presently, but there are no dates given.

John Barnes being his brother's chief adviser, and unscrupulous as he was, would not hesitate, we may be sure, to prejudice the Bishop against Gilpin.

But Gilpin seems to have had another enemy at court. If any man should have loved and honoured him, that man was Hugh Broughton; it was Gilpin who had picked him up on the road-side and had

educated him and given him all the advantages of school and college training which he possessed. Yet this same Hugh Broughton was capable of attempting to do Gilpin the greatest possible injury with Bishop Barnes.

Broughton had in some way obtained much influence over the Bishop, one of whose measures for cleansing "that *augie stabulum*" the Chapter of Durham, was by making Broughton a Canon of Durham,—by the way, I believe, the only appointment to a canonry that it fell to Barnes to make.

Houghton was at that time the best piece of preferment in the Bishop's gift, and this protégé of Gilpin had fixed his heart upon obtaining the living, and was not content to wait for Gilpin's death, but if possible must oust him from the benefice at once. He and Barnes would seem to have laid their heads together, and to have played into each other's hands, one out of revenge for Gilpin's exposure of his malpractices and plain-spoken remonstrances, the other coveting the loaves and fishes of Houghton.

This was what was going on behind the scenes as far as it is possible to ascertain at this time of day. What I have now to relate is the shape which events took as the outcome.

The Bishop being about to hold a visitation, sent a message to Gilpin appointing him to preach the visitation sermon which would be on the following Sunday. It happened that the Rector was on the point of setting forth on one of his expeditions to Tynedale and Readsdale, and he informed the Bishop, by his trusty servant Wm. Airy no doubt, of this, and requested to be

excused from preaching. There were many others, he urged, that would be willing enough to preach at the visitation, but not one who would "performe that duty among those Borders if he neglected it, adding that at any other time he would be ready to performe his duty." When Airy returned, Gilpin asked him how the Bishop had received his message, and was told that he received it and "made no reply, but held his peace." "Qui tacet consentire videtur," saith Mr. Gilpin, "he that replyeth not, seemeth to consent."

Supposing that all was right he went on his journey, but to his great surprise on his return home found himself suspended from all ecclesiastical employment.

Possibly to this date we must refer a letter which he wrote to John Barnes on hearing that he threatened a sequestration of his benefice. There is no other known occasion to which it is possible to refer it. This threat he may have heard of on his return along with the news of his suspension :—

"If you should, as you threaten," says he in this letter, "give out a sequestration of my benefice, you shall do me a greater favour than you are aware of. For at this time I am run in no small debt. I want likewise provision of vituals. Where I have had against Michaelmas six or seven fat oxen, and five or six fat cows, I have now neither cow nor ox, but must seek all from the shambles. A sequestration given out, I may with honesty break up house for a space, which will save me twenty or thirty pounds in my purse. But I trust you will think better of this matter."

A few days after his return he received an order to meet the Bishop at Chester-le-Street, "an ancient town in Durham," to quote Bishop Carlton, "and once the

seat of the bishopric." Here many of the clergy were met together, who were all commanded to come to the Church. When they were assembled, "the Bishop calleth Mr. Gilpin unto him, and saith, 'Mr. Gilpin, I must have you preach to-day.' Mr. Gilpin desired to be excused, 'for I came not,' said he, 'provided; and moreover, I am suspended.' 'But,' saith the Bishop, 'I can free you from that suspension, and doe now free you.' Mr. Gilpin replied that he durst not goe up into the pulpit unprovided. 'But we know,' saith the Bishop, 'that you are never unprovided, but you have now gotten such a habit of preaching, that you are able to performe, if you please, even upon the sodaine.' Mr. Gilpin remained unmovable in his resolution, answering that God was not soe to be tempted, that it was well for him if he were able to performe anything of this kinde upon mature deliberation.'

"Whereunto the Bishop replied, 'I command you upon your canonicall obedience to go up into the pulpit forthwith.'

"Mr. Gilpin delaying a little time, answered, 'Well, sir, seeing it can be none otherwise, your lordship's will be done,' and after a little pause began his sermon."

He observed some of the hearers very carefully taking down all he said; but this did not prevent him from proceeding without hesitation, and from saying all that he intended to say.

As he drew towards the end he addressed himself directly to the bishops; and alluding to the evils of which John Barnes and others were the authors of, he said:—

"Reverend Father, my speech must be directed to your fatherhood. God hath exalted you to be Bishop of this Diocese, and God requireth an account of your government thereof: a reformation of all those matters which are amisse in this church is expected at your hands, and an account thereof is required. And now lest perhaps, while it is apparent that so many enormities are committed every where, your Lordship should make answer that you had no notice of them given you, neither did these things ever come to your knowledge" (which words Mr. Gilpin used, because hee knew well enough that this was the Bishops usual answer, that whensoever men made any complaints against the evill government of the Chancellor,* the Bishop was accustomed to say, Alas, these things I never knew of: what is done cannot be undone; I will take a better order in these matters hereafter, if any such shall come to my knowledge). "Beholde, said Mr. Gilpin, I bring these things to your knowledge this day: let not your Lordship say these crimes have beene committed by the fault of others without your knowledge: for whatsoever either yourself shall doe in person, or suffer through your connivency to be done by others, is wholly your owne. Therefore in the presence of God, his angels, and men, I pronounce your fatherhood to be the author of all these evills, yea and in the strict day of the generall account I shall be a witness to testifie against you that all these things have come to your knowledge by my means; and all these men shall beare witness hereof who have heard me speaking unto you this day."

While he spoke in this strain his friends in the congregation were full of fears as to what would be the consequence to himself, and when he came down from

* Carlton falls here into the error of supposing that John Barnes was Chancellor.

the pulpit, crowded round him, reproaching him for running so great a risk. "You have put a sword into the Bishop's hand," they said, "to slay you; if he has been already offended at you without a cause, what may you not expect from him now?" But Gilpin moved on, putting them gently on one side with his hand, and assuring them there was nothing to fear, "the Lord God overruleth all, and so that the truth may be propagated and God glorified, His will be done concerning me."

Nothing else was talked about all that day; what he had said met with general approval; but there was great apprehension for the consequences to Gilpin himself.

The service over, the Bishop and clergy dined together. "After dinner," to quote Carlton's narrative again, "Mr. Gilpin cometh to the Bishop to see him and take leave and so return homewards. 'It shall not be,' said the Bishop, 'for I will bring you to your home,' and so Mr. Gilpin returned home accompanied by the Bishop.

"When they were now come into Mr. Gilpin's house, and walked within into the parlour, the Bishop upon a sodaine caught Mr. Gilpin by the hand, and used these words upon him, 'Father Gilpin, I acknowledge you are fitter to be bishop than myself to be parson of this church of yours. I aske forgiveness for errours passed. Forgive me, father; I know you have hatched up some chickens that now seek to picke out your eyes;* but so long as I shall live Bishop of Durham, be secure; no man shall injure you.'"

* Alluding to Hugh Broughton.

Thus Gilpin triumphed over his enemies, and did so by the simple means of being true to his convictions and fearing no man, while he endeavoured to do what was possible to promote much-needed reforms. All good men rejoiced at such an issue to what seemed to threaten great disaster to Gilpin; it was a grand assertion of the right of free speech and of the paramount authority of justice and righteousness.

No man in the diocese dare have spoken as Gilpin had done, and few had the vantage-ground which gives such utterances an irresistible force, namely, that of a consistent and universally honoured career.

As to John Barnes, it does not appear that Gilpin's plain speaking produced any change in his conduct. As already suggested, he seems subsequently to have been guilty of extortionate charges on Gilpin for which he was strictly called to account. Apparently his brother still allowed him great influence and employed his service in administering the diocese. In 1584 he appears as one of the commissioners for holding an episcopal visitation.

Broughton resigned his canonry to take the living of Washington in 1580, probably soon after this incident, and in 1583 disappears from the diocese. He then went abroad into Germany, made himself notorious for attacking Jews in their synagogues and Roman Catholics in their churches, and among other adventures is said to have been offered a cardinal's hat. Subsequently he returned to England, where, having outlived his credit and become the jest even of the stage, he died about 1612—a monument of the miser-

able failure which may await men of the most brilliant talents if they have no principle.

In the Life of Ambrose Barnes, a collateral descendant of Bishop Barnes, published by the Surtee Society in 1867, the following apology is made for the Bishop's treatment of Gilpin:—

"He who considers what ill offices Hugh Broughton (a man of more learning than gratitude) did Gilpin with the Ordinary will not hastily censure the Bishop. The Bishop thought he might use his own prudence in trying Gilpin's patience, when, being satisfied in the man's simplicity and integrity, he gave him frankly as great an encouragement as any could do, confessing Gilpin was fitter to be Bishop of Durham than himself to be Rector of Houghton." *

This explanation does not attempt to cover the "suspension," and is somewhat meagre as regards the rest of this business. Barnes at this time was a good deal under fifty and Gilpin over sixty and a man of national fame, and recognised as one of the most distinguished of the clergy of the diocese. Gilpin was not one whose patience needed testing, and Barnes was not the man who had a right to "use his own prudence" in testing it.

It is pleasant, however, in leaving this somewhat painful episode, to observe that the kind words spoken in the parlour of Houghton Rectory were as kindly received as they were spoken, and that henceforth there was much cordiality between Bishop Barnes and Bernard Gilpin.

Fuller says that the Bishop was "a great friend at

* *Life of Ambrose Barnes*, p. 28.

last to Bernard Gilpin," and he mentions the death of both in the same chapter, "seeing they were loving in their lives, their memories in my book shall not be divided." *

Gilpin's will contains ample evidence of the kindly feeling that may be dated from that day at Chester-le-Street and Houghton. Therein he expresses his confidence that in case his successor should demand anything for dilapidations the Bishop "will persuade him to be content with reason, and to do all thinges with charitie;" further on, he leaves "to the right reverende father in God, Richarde, lord bishop of Durham, for a simple token of remembrance, three silver spoones, with acornes, and allso I give unto him the historie of *Paulus Jovius* and allso *Opuscula Calvini*, gathered together in one lardge volume;" and with other tokens of regard and confidence he appoints the Bishop one of his three supervisours.

In a previous chapter, the curious coincidence that a collateral descendant of Gilpin, Dr. Richard Gilpin of Greystoke, was, like Bernard Gilpin, offered the bishopric of Carlisle and declined it, is mentioned, so that twice over that bishopric was declined by members of the Gilpin family; and now another interesting fact has to be recorded about this same Richard Gilpin.

He was one of the "Ejected Ministers" after the Restoration, and became a very distinguished man among the Nonconformists. Calamy speaks in the highest terms of his abilities, character, and godliness.† And his very learned and valuable work, the *Dæmono-*

* Fuller's *Church History*, Vol. III. p. 106; IX. Cent. xvi. c.10–13.
† Calamy's *Ejected Ministers*, ii. p. 154.

logia Sacra, or "a Treatise on Satan's Temptations," is a standing monument of his powers.

Dr. Gilpin settled at Newcastle, and Ambrose Barnes, a collateral descendant of the Bishop, was one of those who knew his value, and, as we read in Barnes' memoirs, "when the Five Mile Act came out, Dr. Gilpin lodged at Mr. Barnes' house for more security. When his goods were distrained upon, Mr. Barnes, to prevent them being squandered away, replevyed them. And when there was a design to banish the Doctor from Newcastle, Mr. Barnes, by persuading the magistrates of his great usefulness in the town by his skill in physic, procured him quietness to the end of King Charles his reign." *

Thus by a sort of retributive justice, which is perhaps not uncommon, the wrong done by a Barnes to a Gilpin in one century was balanced in the next century by the kindness of another Barnes to another Gilpin.

Before leaving Richard Gilpin, I may mention that under Cromwell's scheme for founding a university at Durham, in many respects an admirable scheme, and which was frustrated by the death of the Protector, he was named as one of the visitors of the proposed university. Among his colleagues were Sir Thomas Widdrington, Lords Fairfax, Grey, Wharton, and Falconbridge, Sir Henry Vane, and Sir Arthur Haselrigge, and other well-known persons. Dr. Gilpin had entered into the scheme with enthusiasm and hope.†

This Richard Gilpin was a worthy representative

* *Life of Ambrose Barnes*, published by the Surtees Society, p. 142.

† See *Memoir of Richard Gilpin*, prefixed to the *Demonologia Sacra*, edition of 1867, p. xxvi.

of Bernard. At Greystoke, during his ministry there, he was known as the "good parson," and from all reports he was one of those in whose view

> "All worldly joys go less
> To the one joy of doing kindnesses."

Within a year or two after Barnes became bishop, matters came to an open rupture between the Dean and Chapter of Durham and himself, and he invoked the aid of Archbishop Sandys to reduce that *augie stabulum* to something like order.

The chief head and front of the offending was Dean Whittingham, whose "orders" were Presbyterian, and whom Barnes and Sandys wished to deprive, as being a layman and therefore incapable of holding the deanery.

Bernard Gilpin's connection with this unpleasant complication, and which alone warrants its introduction here, was as follows:—

Gilpin had been requested to act as a commissioner in the dispute between the Chapter and the Bishop and Archbishop, and had declined to do so; he could not take their side, he did not wish to be mixed up in the controversy; and this refusal gave them grievous offence. It so happened that he had recently obtained the living of Ellingham for the head-master of Houghton School, and the Chapter, as a penalty on Gilpin, deprived his friend at Ellingham of a large proportion of his income.

Gilpin, assisted by some friends, made up to the poor man his loss by this unworthy action of the Chapter, and Whittingham the dean having died in the meantime, addressed the following letter to

Dr. Wilson, who was generally spoken of as the new dean:—

"Right worshipful, whereas I hear your worship named of many to the deanery of Durham, these are most humbly to beseech you (if it shall please God so to bless that house) that you will help, as I trust God you may, to redress, among sundry enormities, one which hath happened a year ago or more.—The dean and chapter of Durham are parsons of a parish in Northumberland, called Ellingham. The living was better than thirty pounds a year. Our schoolmaster of Houghton, a scholar of Oxford, made labour for it. At his suit, and mine together, it was granted; as we judged, with all such commodities as the last incumbent, and others before, had had. But soon after, the dean and chapter took away from the vicar as good as twenty pounds a year; so that the poor man, having wife and children, might have begged, if I and other friends had not holpen him: God knoweth it hath been a costly matter to me. But my trust now is, that your worship, knowing the matter, will be willing to help it, and may help it; for the present possessor, Mr. Selby, hath nothing to show but a promise from Mr. Whitingham, whereunto the chapter would never consent. Mr. Ralph Lever can inform you of all the matter. If your worship can help it, surely you cannot do a better deed. Would to God all violent workers of injuries were resisted!—If God should send you into this country, I trust to be better known to your worship. I pray God preserve you evermore.

"By yours to his power,

"BERNARD GILPIN.

"*Houghton, July* 11, 1579."

There must have been a good deal of justification for Bishop Barnes' strongly expressed opinion on the

"Church at Durham." Gilpin here speaks of the Ellingham disgrace as only one "among sundry enormities."

Early in Bernard Gilpin's Houghton incumbency, as already detailed, the Puritans had done their best to win him over to their side, but in vain.

It would appear that it was at a much later period that the Romanists directed their attacks at him with the view of obtaining his adhesion to their views.

At an earlier period they had not sufficient energy, nor were they taking that position of direct separation from, and antagonism to, the Reformed Church of England; but the Papal Bull of excommunication of 1571, and the results of the foundation of the college at Douay, inspired them to exertions hitherto not attempted.

The increased proselytising activities of the Romish party may be dated from about 1577, at which date the seminary priests from Douay were beginning to arrive in England. And in 1580 the Jesuits Campian and Parsons were here creating a great sensation and making many converts. Something very like a panic was being produced in the State, and very severe measures were accordingly being adopted to check their operations.

It was probably between 1577 and 1580 that many attempts were made to win Gilpin back to Romanism.

How long he had hesitated between Romanism and the Reformation, and the difficulty with which he had thrown off the doctrine of the Pope's supremacy was well remembered, and the Romish partisans hoped

that there might still be lingering in his heart some affection for the old system.

At last a kinsman of Gilpin's,* one Thomas Selsthorp, engaged in the thankless enterprise; in writing to Gilpin on the subject he concluded his letter as follows:—

"Now I beseech you, remember what God hath called you to, and beware of passionate doings. I know you have suffered under great slanders and evil reports, yet you may by God's grace bridle all affections, and be an upright man. The report of you is great in London, and in all other places; so that in my opinion you shall in these days, even shortly, either do much good, leaning to the truth, or else (which I pray God turn away from us) you shall do as much evil to the church as ever Arius did."

Gilpin's reply was as follows:—

"Grace and peace. Your large letter was brought unto me, when I had small leisure to answer it, as he can tell you who bringeth back this unto you. Howbeit I thought it not fit to let him come back without an answer, albeit the conclusion of your letter gave me small incouragement to write. For who would take the paines to write unto you, seeing you are fully resolved and determined, as you affirme, never to be perswaded from your opinions by any argument a man can bring? It could not chuse but be a most grievous thing to the Prophet Jeremy, when he cryed out to the people, *Hear the word of the Lord*, that they should answer with a stiffe necke, *We will not heare.* But let us leave these things to the divine operation, which is able to mollifie your heart, and to open the ears of the deaf adder that stoppeth the same against the voice of the

* A nephew: Gilpin's sister Margaret married a Selsthorp.

charmer, charme he never so wisely. You looke back upon the ages passed: you doe well, if also you looke back to the times of the Patriarkes, the Prophets of Christ, and his Apostles, and other holy men, with whom if you advise without prejudice of blinded affection, they will lead you farre from that blindnesse, from that errour, I may well say, from that grosse idolatry, which crept into the Church while men slept. Whereas you are grieved at the fall of Monasteries and suppression of Abbeys, I am sorry you should be blinded in this case. For very many of your owne religion have confessed that they could not possibly subsist any longer, because the cry of them like the cry of Sodome was ascended into the eares of God. Their Sodomiticall crimes were so manifest that they could not be longer concealed; the Lord could endure those wicked men no longer. But if you call to minde what enemies those men were to the ministry of the word of God, taking away most sacrilegiously the maintenance allowed for the ministers of the word, hardly leaving in the most countries any one rectory unspoiled, you would easily judge that those men could not possibly stand and flourish any longer. This is the fruit of Luther's doctrine, and the whole word of God truly preached, that God shall destroy that wicked one with the breath of his mouth.

"Whereas you say that he which commeth to God must believe, I wish you would consider that thing rightly, that faith and religion can never finde peace and quiet but in the sacred word of God. *Faith commeth by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* Whence it cometh that whoso beleeveth in bulls, indulgences, images, and many other vaine constitutions of men, cannot possibly have true faith. All those things vanish away, wheresoever the word of God hath power and authority. That rest which you say that you finde in the Church of Rome, your Catholick Church forsooth, if you take not the better heed, will undoubtedly

faile you in your greatest necessity. You say that you doe not finde in that religion any thing opposite to the Gospell. But if you looke narrowly into it, you may see in that religion the word of God rejected, the Golden Legends and Festivalls, with bulls, indulgences, and many other things of that sort for the most part obtruded upon men in stead of the word of God. But here is a large field and I want leisure. I hope I shall get opportunity to write unto you more at large concerning these things. God open your eyes that you may see the abomination of that citty which is built upon seven hills: (Apoc. 17). Looke over Hierome upon that place. If in that Church the Sacraments be corrupted, will you reject the grace of God when he openeth the eyes of his servants to reforme these corruptions? Beware of that fearfull sentence of St. John: *He that is filthy, let him be filthy still.* You alledge that if you should now begin to drink of another cup, &c. quite forgetting that in the Church of Rome your selfe and all other laymen are utterly excluded from the cup, contrary to the manifest commandement of God, *Drinke ye all of this.* Your learnedest doctors of Lovaine with many others were not able to defend so great an abuse of the Supper. If you call us hereticks, and fly from us, because we have forsaken so great abuses, superstitions and errours, to the end that we might draw neare to the sacred word of God, and holy institutions of Christ, we can appeale from your uncharitable prejudice, and are able to say with Saint Paul, *I little esteeme to be judged of you, it is the Lord which judgeth me.*

"But you alledge that it is a perillous thing to heare our Sermons. So said the persequutours of Saint Stephen (Acts 7.), and stopped their eares. So spoke Amazia touching Amos the Prophet (Amos 7.), *The land is not able to beare all his words.* Like unto which are those whom David compareth to the deafe adder which stoppeth

her eares. (Psal. 58.) Like unto whom were many in the time of the Apostles unto whom the Gospell was hid, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of unbelievers, that the light of the Gospell should not shine upon them.

"Touching those Romane thunder-claps there is no great cause why we should be afraid: those bugbearers were invented to affright children, they are not to be feared by men of yeares. Erasmus calleth them *Bruta fulmina*, foolish false-fires. If there were in the Pope and his Cardinalls, who curse us with so much bitternesse, but the least resemblance of Peter and Paul; had they the fervent charity of those holy men, and their exquisite diligence to feed the flocke of Christ day and night, with other apostolick vertues; then were their threats to be feared: but they have changed the humility of Peter into the pride of Lucifer, the poverty and daily labours of the Apostles into the riches of Cresus, and into the lazinesse and luxury of Sardanapalus. To conclude, what agreement is there betwixt light and darknesse? God hath promised in the second of Malachy, that he will curse their blessings, or turne their blessings into curses, who consider not in their hearts to give glory unto his name. See Hierom upon the third of Esay: Those which call you blessed, seduce you. How many thousands of men are seduced by indulgences, which are extended to many thousands of yeares, if the price be according? The world seeth and is grieved to beholde how the brothers of Saint Johns Hospitall, had granted licences to those who had laid violent hands upon themselves to enjoy the buriall of other Christians, with many such like flattering fictions.

"As touching the life of your grandmother, I never heard but well; but I suppose she was a superstitious woman. If she kept you at home with her out of her tender and naturall affection onely, and not to prevent your knowledge

of the Gospell, I shall desire pardon for my mistaking. Yet many men are persuaded that she and your uncles withheld both from your selfe and your sisters a great part of the portion which was left unto you. But let these things passe; seeing I have not beene able to effect, nor have effected as yet any thing for you, that money which was given to me by legacy, I will bestow upon your sister, if it please her, with some addition also, because I am persuaded she hath more need of it.

"As concerning the Catholick Church, God is my witnesse, that it is the whole desire of mine heart, and mine assured confidence, that I shall die a member of it. But if I shall be so farre misled by the pompous outside of the Church of Rome, as to approve those intollerable abuses, superstitions, and idolatries, which so many wayes rob God of his honour, I should not believe my selfe a member of Jesus Christ. If you approve of none interpretation of Scriptures, but what proceeds from Rome, you may easily affirme whatsoever you please. There is nothing so absurd, or so contrary to the truth of the eternall God, which may not be wrested by their corrupt glosses, as it may seeme to serve to a wicked cause. With such kinde of men is no disputation to be held. As for that which you inferre touching Arrius, and the rest of that ranke, it is nothing to the purpose. For all the writings of the Prophets, together with other manifest Scriptures, whereunto we ought to have recourse in doubts of this nature, and to be concluded by them, doe evidently confound Arrius, and all the rest his partakers. Consubstantiality, which the Greekes call ὁμοούσιον, is confirmed by very many evident testimonies of Scripture. But so is not Transubstantiation, which hath so molested the braines of Scotus, Occam, Biel, and all the schoole divines, that many a time they are shrewdly put to it, what they had best say for removing the absurdities which arise therefrom. Therefore it is apparent

that it is a meere fiction without any foundation of Scripture. So that Scotus (as Bishop Tonstall did many times ingeniously confesse) was of opinion that the Church might better and with more ease make use of some more commodious exposition of those words in the holy Supper. And the Bishop was of the minde that we ought to speake reverently of the holy Supper, as did the auncient Fathers, but that the opinion of Transubstantiation might well be let alone. This thing also the same Bishop Tonstall was wont to affirme both in words and writings, that Innocent the third knew not what he did when he put Transubstantiation among the articles of faith; and he said that Innocentius wanted learned men about him; and indeed, (saith the Bishop) if I had beene of his Councell, I make no doubt but I might have been able to have disswaded him from that resolution. When Mr. Chedsey said that the Catholicks should doe well to give way in the Article of Transubstantiation, I heard not himselfe speak the words, but one which heard him told me. Whereas you write touching the imprisonment of him and others, truly I am of the opinion, that as for this present life, they live most quietly. Nor doe I think that themselves could have made choice of a more retired kinde of life, if the sting of conscience trouble them not, for maintaining a cause that is not good, but built upon the sand. But if you will needes have it that men must of necessity connive at the beastly and abominable lives of so many Romane Bishops, above thirty; you may also finde fault with our Saviour himselfe, for discovering so plainly the pernicious enormities, both of the Pharises (who in those times were accounted forsooth the holy Fathers) and also of their fathers then dead: you may blame also the Prophet Esay, who will not have evill men to be called good, denouncing a curse against that man, who calleth him holy that is not holy: find fault also with saint Bernard, who calleth them the ministers of Anti-

christ. Those things which other godly men have written to this purpose, doe worthily excuse us. He blameth those things openly concerning which he confesseth that it is a shame to speaks: I reveale not hidden things (saith he) but I reproove things publickely knowne: unto which thing we are even obliged by the commandement of God. (Esaia. 58. 1.) *Shew my people their sinnes.*

"Whereas you say that five Sacraments are rejected by us, you doe not say well, rejected, for wee use them reverently, according to the word of God; nor doe we take away the name of the Sacrament, as the word Sacrament is generally used, as was the washing of feete, and many other things which may retaine the name of a Sacrament in generall, as also they doe among the fathers. But the auncient fathers and some schoole-men do affirme, that onely Baptisme and the Eucharist are properly called Sacraments. It is also the testimony of Bessarion: We read (saith he) of these two Sacraments onely manifestly delivered in the Gospell. I wonder at you that you doe so wrest the words of Saint Paul to such a sence, as that out of those words all the ceremonies of the masse may be established: whereas you cannot be ignorant, that the greatest part of them hath been added many ages after by the Bishops of Rome. Wee reade also that the Apostles consecrated with the words of the Gospell, and with the Lord's prayer. Moreover, whereas Saint Paul had even at that time ordayned already, that the people should not only eate the bread with the minister (as his owne words doe manifestly proove) but also drinke of the cup, you see how these fellowes have utterly robbed the Church of that ordination of Christ and his Apostles: but how justly, or by what good authority they have done thus, let themselves look unto it, I could never in my reading find out the ground of that authority. I find the contrary; to wit, that all men are altogether forbidden to alter any thing

touching the word and will of God, delivered in the holy Scriptures.

"You say that the Scriptures allow prayer for the dead, and that you know this well enough. Saint Hierom saith, that the book of Macchabes is profitable for manners, not to establish doctrine. You alledge that Saint Augustine doubted in many places whether there be a purgatorie. If that be a doubtful poynt, then it is not to be obtruded as an article of faith: but to be left indifferent. For *faith is a substance:* (Heb. 11. 1.), and faith ought not to waver, saith Saint James. The Bishop of Rochester, writeth concerning purgatory, that amongst the auncients, there was either little or no mention of it. And so long as there was no care taken for purgatorie, no man sought after indulgences. And so those innumerable gaynes by pardons were never knowne before purgatory was found out. What shall we now say to bee meant by those words of Saint Paul *esteeming gayne godlines*, if this be not it? This mart hath fed and still doth feed many idle bellyes, who stoutly drive away the word of God to the best of their ability, that they may not loose their swine. Howbeit at the last the truth shall prevail, how ever these men have conspired together.

"As touching that which you adde concerning the invocation of Saints, Saint Augustine exhorteth us rather to stand to the Scriptures, then either to his writings, or the writings of others: and not to build upon his writings without the authoritie of Scriptures. And surely in this poynt my conscience is resolved, that there is not one poynt of all these which are controverted, that is proved by more evident testimonyes of Scripture, then this, that God alone is to be prayed unto, and by one mediator, namely Jesus Christ. Rom. 10. 13. How shall they call on him in whome they have not beleeved? We must beleeve in God onely, therefore he onely is to bee prayed unto. That

distinction touching invocation and advocation, that albeit you allow not the invocation of Saints, at the least you allow their advocation, is frivolous: because, as those men robb Christ of his honour, who seeke another mediator, so these are no lesse injurious to Christ, who seeke another advocate, because we have Christ an advocate with the father (1. Job 2. 1.) and Esai. 63: he affirmeth that *Abraham knoweth us not.* Truly I assure my selfe, that Abraham, the father of the faithfull, is no lesse a Saint, then any other of the Saints in heaven. You say, you beleeve the communion of Saints, which we also doe all of us beleeve: but you inferre thereupon, that you understand not how there can be a communion of Saints, if the Saints departed doe not pray for us, and we call upon them for assistance. But the Church of Christ understandeth the communion of Saints farre otherwise. For in the usuall phrase of Scripture, Saints are not understood to be those that are departed, and whose soules are in heaven, but those who are living here on the earth. Nor shall you almost thorough the whole Scripture of the Old and New Testament find the name of Saint given to any man, but that thereby is understood a Saint living heere on the earth. Yea, sometimes the Scripture speaketh more expressely as in Psal. 16. 3: *to the Saints which are on the earth: all my delight is in them.* If any man ever had or could have a communion with the Saints in heaven, surely David had it. But he expoundeth the communion wherewith he was acquainted, that is the communion of Saints on earth. So Saint John expoundeth this poynt. 1. John: 1. 3. *What we have seen and knowe that declare we unto you, that yee also may have communion with us, and that our communion may be with God and with his son Jesus Christ.* First, all the Church of Christ have communion with the Apostolick Church, *that you may have communion with us:* Secondly, this communion of Saints shall consist in the preaching the

word, and in the participation of diverse gifts for the edification of the Church in publicke and private prayers. Thirdly, but in powering out of our prayers we have communion with the Father and the Sonne, or with the Father by the Sonne. Heere is no mention at all, no respect had to the Saints departed. This communion according to the words of holy Scripture extendeth no further then to the Church on earth. The Saints departed are not called in Scripture simply Saints, but the *Congregation of the first borne in heaven, and the spirits of just and perfect men.* (Heb: 12. 23.) After this life we shall have communion with them, but as for those who require this communion with them in this life, let them either product from the Scripture what they say, or let them heare that sentence of our blessed Lord, *In vaine doe ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the traditions of men.* (Math: 15. 9.)

"I confesse that if you have respect to the use of this our age, or some former ones, the deceased are called Saints; but it is not the custome of this or that age, but the rule of the holy Scripture that is propounded for our imitation. But what do we contending about this point? Those men who stand so hard for invocation of Saints shall grant it us to be a thing indifferent: for indeed it is the safest way to go to the fountaine of mercy it selfe, and let the streames alone. Nor suffer those men to perswade you, who say that they detract nothing from God, by directing their prayers to the Saints: For no man can detract from God more than he who transferreth the worship due to God alone unto the creature. For invocation is a part of divine worship: and this worship hee communicateth to no creature, who will not give his glory to another.

"As for your arguments touching images, and fasting (which point of fasting God forbid that either I or any one should deny, yea rather we exhort all persons to the

practice of it, onely we desire to have the superstition and wicked opinions remooved) together with those other arguments touching relicks and exorcismes in casting out uncleane spirits forsooth, which thing when it leadeth to idolatry is the signe of a false prophet: (Deut. 13.) Although answer might be made to all these with much ease, yet because I now want leisure, as being over laden with imployments, in regard that I am destitute of a Curate at this time, and have a very large parish to visite, and also my body is weak, and subject to faint with wearinesse, being worne out with paynes taking: therefore in all these respectes, I have thought it fitting to defer mine answere to these points until another time.

"If you be unwilling to come to Houghton upon Sunday next, because you will not be an offence to my parishioners (in which case you cannot blame me if I appeare very carefull of my parishioners, in regard of the great charge laid upon me, for it is apparent in the times of the prophets, and in all succeeding ages since, that the vulgar people have been too prone to superstition, and a mischief doth increase easily, and creep further in one day, then good lessons in a whole moneth), therefore, Sunday excepted (unlesse you will come up into the Quire, which in my judgment you ought not to refuse), if you come straightwayes after the Sabbath is ended, and depart about Saterday noone, you shall bee heartily welcome: therefore that excuse which you pretend ought not to retarde your accesse. And although your last conclusion doe (as I told you already) take away all hope and confidence from a man who shall conferre with you, yet I will not cease to hope better things touching your conversion then you seeme to hope of your selfe. Saint Paul had once a firme resolution to dye a Pharisy, and a persecuter of Christians; but God had reserved for him the treasure of power and mercy, to the end that he might ordayne him to preach that glorious name

which he had formerly persecuted. I commend you to the goodness of the Almightie God, which is able by the spirit of knowledge, to leade you into all truth. Fare ye well. From Houghton the 14. of October, 1580.

"Your loving Uncle

"BERNARD GILPIN."

This is a very valuable document, as the expression of Gilpin's matured views and because of some interesting incidental allusions.

Earlier in his career he declared that he had not read Luther's works, and could say nothing about them, but when this letter was written he says, speaking of the downfall of the monasteries, &c., "This is the fruit of Luther's doctrine and the whole Word of God truely preached," and alludes to Luther's theory of consubstantiation with a degree of approval, "as confirmed by many evident testimonies of Scripture;" clearly his reserve as to Luther was gone, and he had given some attention to his labours and writings. On the whole question of Romish doctrine he writes with no doubt or uncertainty. Bishop Tonstall had evidently still a warm place in his heart; observe with what respect he quotes his opinion on the Lord's Supper and the doctrine of transubstantiation, as indeed he did also in his letter to his brother in 1575.

A curious allusion occurs to Dr. Chedsey, one of his former colleagues in the discussion with Peter Martyr, and who was now in prison. Selsthorp seems to have desired Gilpin's opinion as to the justice or injustice of that imprisonment. Had Gilpin written what his opinion was, he would probably have said that such measures were to be condemned, but then this would

have given a handle to Selsthorp; he therefore waives the question with the suggestion that at all events Chedsey enjoyed in prison what he could not have enjoyed outside, namely, a quiet life.

Observe also two or three other points, *e.g.*, his remark on the communion of saints, which falls short of the doctrine generally held on this point—a result of his experience of life which had become an axiom with him, "that a mischief doth increase easily and creep further in one day than good lessons in a whole month;" what he says about fasting, "which point God forbid that either I or any one should deny, yea rather we exhort all persons to the practice of it;" this gives us a little glimpse into his private life of which we should have liked to know much more; and notice towards the end of the letter his care that his people should not be scandalised by what I presume he feared, namely, any irreverent behaviour on Selsthorp's part, which would be observed if he were in the body of the church, and might not be seen if he was in the choir.

Connected with these Romanist schemes for gaining Gilpin back to Rome was the Genison Case.

A friend of Gilpin's, a Mr. Genison of Newcastle, had a nephew living with him recently returned from Italy, where he had fallen under the influence of the Jesuits, had become one of their Order, and was full of the zeal of a novice. His uncle was much distressed about his perversion, and after doing all he could himself in vain to bring him to a right mind, he could think of nothing better than to ask the Rector of Houghton to take him in hand and try what he could make of him.

Very unwillingly, as he had little hope of success in such a case as this was reported to be, Gilpin consented to receive him for a time at Houghton.

So far, however, from having any notion of being instructed by the Rector, this youth had actually conceived the idea of converting Gilpin, and only came to Houghton with this end in view.

When he found he could make nothing of the Rector he did what he could to shake the faith of the servants and of such of the scholars and parishioners as came in his way. Of course this could not be tolerated, and Gilpin was obliged to request his uncle to remove him. He did so in the following letter:—

"I trust, Sir, you remember, that when you first spake to me about your brother's son, your promise was, that I should have a license from the bishop, for my warrant. But that is not done. Wherefore you must either get one yourself, or suffer me. For our curate and churchwardens are sworn to present, if any be in the parish, which utterly refuse to come to church. I only desired him that he would come into the quire in the sermon-time, but half an hour; which he utterly refused, and willed me to speak no more of it. He is indeed fixed in his errors; and I have perceived by his talk, that his coming here was not to learn, but to teach: for thinking to find me half a papist, he trusted to win me over entirely. But whereas, I trust in God, I have put him clearly from that hope; yet I stand in great danger, that he shall do much hurt in my house, or in the parish; for he cometh furnished with all the learning of the hot college of Jesuits. They have found out, I perceive, certain expositions of the Old Testament, never heard of before, to prove the invocation of saints from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He will not grant that any

thing hath been wrong in the Church of Rome: the most abominable errors of indulgences, pardons, false miracles, and false reliques, pilgrimages, and such like, he can find them all in the Gospel; and will have them all to be good and holy.—For my part, I have determined myself otherwise: age and want of memory compel me to take my leave of this wretched world; and at this time of life not to study answers to such trumpery, and new inventions; seeing I was never any disputer in all my life. I trust there be learned men enough in the universities, who will sufficiently answer all that ever they can bring that is worth answering.—Wherefore, good Mr. Genison, seeing your cousin is fixed in his errors, as he plainly confesseth, help to ease me of this burthen, that I may with quietness apply to my vocation. I am sent for to preach in divers places, but I cannot go from home, so long as he is here. People, in these evil days, are given to learn more superstition in a week, than true religion in seven years.—But if, notwithstanding, you are desirous to have him tarry two or three weeks longer, I must needs have license from the bishop: whether you well get the same, or I must, I refer to your good pleasure. And so I pray God to preserve you evermore.

"Your loving friend to his power,

"BERNARD GILPIN."

It was a strange turn for events to take when the scholar assumed the *rôle* of the teacher, but ultimately it would appear that Gilpin succeeded in making some impression on the presumptuous youth, and a discussion in writing took place between them, which was hardly possible unless the Jesuit had shown some willingness to learn. An extract from a letter which Gilpin wrote to him is here given:—

"As sickness, sores, and other troubles would suffer

me, I have answered your objections out of St. Austin; and the chief of them, I trust, are answered to the contentation of such as are willing to stay their conscience upon God and His word, and not upon man's vain inventions, wherein they shall find no test of conscience nor quietness of mind.—When leisure will serve to finish the residue, I will send them unto you. In the meantime, I pray God to illuminate your eyes with His Heavenly light, and to guide your feet into the way of Peace."

Thus, then, from both sides Gilpin was attacked, but all to no effect. Years and years of patient investigation and of prayerful search of the Scriptures had brought him into a position in which he was as secure against the arguments of the Puritans as he was against those of the Romanists.

In his old age he was the same in heart as in his youth, in his conviction that Christian living and godliness are after all the great purpose of Christianity, and that whatever hinders these, as dissension and division do as surely as heretical and depraved doctrine, is to be avoided by him who has to answer for his own soul and for those of others.

Besides these assaults on his faith, he had to endure others upon his integrity of purpose and uprightness of conduct. A certain Mr. Wren was one of those who spoke ill of him; and the following letter illustrates both the slanderous charges which were made against Gilpin and the Christian way in which he met them:—

"I am very sorry, Mr. Wren, to hear that you should fall into such unlawful contention with any one; and that, to

maintain an evil cause, you should make an untrue report of me. I am very glad, however, that the two other false reports, if it be as you say, were not raised by you: one, that I should make the marriage of ministers unlawful; the other, that I should make their children bastards. Whereas certainly it is known, that long ago I was accused before bishop Tunstal for speaking in favour of priests' marriage: since which time I have never altered my mind; but in my sermons in this country, Northumberland, Westmoreland, Cumberland, Yorkshire, and Lancashire, I have, as opportunity served, spoken in defence of priests' marriage. And allowing their marriage, I trust no man will believe that I should make their children bastards.

"You say I am called hypocrite: I know I am so of divers. How they will answer God's law therein, I leave to their own conscience. But verily for my own part, I can thank them; for when I hear it, I trust in God, I gain not a little thereby in studying clearly to subdue that vice; which I have strived against ever since I studied the Holy Scriptures. And, I suppose, very few or no preachers in England have preached oftener against that vice than I; and that, as I trust, with a clear conscience.

"But to make an end at this time (because this bearer can show you what small time I have, being sore overcharged with manifold studies and businesses) it is time, good Mr. Wren, both for you and me (age and sundry diseases, messengers of death, giving us warning) more deeply to ripe our own consciences, and more diligently to search our own faults, and to leave off from curious hearkening and espying of other men's: especially when it breedeth contention, and can in no wise edify. I pray you read St. James, the latter part of the third chapter, and there learn from whence cometh contentious wisdom. And this, I beseech you, remember, that it is not long since God did most mercifully visit you with great sickness. At that

time I doubt not but you lamented sore your duty forgotten in your life past: and, for the time to come, if God would restore you to your health, I trust you promised a godly repentance, and reformation of life. Good Mr. Wren, if you have somewhat forgotten that godly mind, pray to God to bring it again; and being had, keep it. Pray in faith, and St. James saith, God will hear you; whom I beseech ever more to have you in his blessed keeping.

"Your loving friend to his power,

"BERNARD GILPIN."

The following letter refers to slanders of a different type. It is not known to whom it was addressed nor to whom it refers:—

"After my most hearty and due commendations: having heard that Sir William Mitchell, one of your brother's executors, reported evil of me in sundry places, bruiting abroad that I withhold from him great sums of money; and I know nothing wherefore, but for sixteen books which I had of your brother, being to return either the price or the books again: I heartily beseech you, seeing that you are joined executor likewise, that you will let me know by this bearer, William Ayray, if you can find any thing in any writings or accounts of your brother, that can be lawfully demanded of me, and, God willing, it shall be paid or I be much elder. If, as I believe, I be debtor for nothing else, saving the sixteen books, whereof I know no price, I have given this bearer, my servant, such instructions, that he will either satisfy you, or I will make return of the books.—I pray Almighty God to have you ever in his blessed keeping.

"Your loving friend to his power,

"BERNARD GILPIN."

By this time Gilpin was becoming an old man; he was considerably past sixty, and years and hard work

were telling upon him. We may imagine him saying, "from henceforth let no man trouble me;" saying and praying this, "let me be quiet and do my own business," for "the night cometh, in which no man can work."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE END.

BERNARD GILPIN had been a hard worker from his youth upwards. The demands on his highly sensitive nature had always been excessive, for he felt things deeply; his mental labours had been by no means trifling; he read much and thought much; and his bodily exertions and exposure to all weathers were excessive. It was not surprising then that at a comparatively early age his strength and powers began to fail. But it is better to wear out than to rust out. He had been spending himself for God and man, and none of his powers had been frittered away.

In his letter to Thomas Selsthorp, written in 1580, he alludes to his weakness of body, and says he "was subject to faint with weariness, being worn out with paynes-taking;" and in one of his letters to Genison, quoted a page or two ago of about the same date or a little later, he speaks of "sickness, sores, and other troubles;" and again, writing to a friend, certainly after 1582, he says, "To sustain all these travels and labours I have a very weak body, subject to many diseases; by the monitions whereof I am daily warned to remember death. My greatest grief of all is that my memory is

quite decayed; my sight faileth; my hearing faileth: with other ailments more than I can well express."

This earthly house of his tabernacle was giving warnings of dissolution, and doubtless letting "in new light through chinks that time" was making.

Evidently the end was drawing on; it would appear that his constitution had never been very robust, and he had been burning the candle at both ends for many a long year in a way which the strongest constitution could ill sustain.

Thus struggling with weakness and failing faculties and ailments, there befel him an accident which very much hastened his death. As he was crossing the market-place at Durham, an ox ran at him and pushed him down with such violence that it was feared that he would presently expire. His life was spared; but he lay for many weeks confined to his bed, and although he did get out again and was able to walk about, he never recovered even the little strength he had before, and continued lame for the rest of his life.

Accidents of this kind were never very formidable trials to a mind so well ordered as his. He had long believed that misfortunes are intended for our good, and should make us reflect; and thus he always used them, making self-examination a necessary sequel to every calamity. Hence misfortunes never cast him down, but were rather occasions for thankfulness than for murmurings.

After this Durham accident he had not many months to wait. Early in February 1584, feeling himself very weak, he was conscious that the end was coming. He told his friends what he foresaw, and

spoke of his death with the happy composure which was to be expected from one who had lived so long as he in the fear and service of God. Soon after he was confined to his chamber. To the last his senses were perfect.

A few days before his death he desired to be raised up in bed, and that his people should be summoned to the chamber. He first sent for the poor, and beckoning them to his bedside, said that "he found he was going out of the world; he hoped they would be his witnesses at the great day, that he had endeavoured to do his duty among them, and he prayed God to remember them after he was gone. He would not have them weep for him; if ever he had told them any good thing, he would have them remember that in his stead. Above all things, he exhorted them to fear God and keep his commandments—telling them, if they would do this, they could never be left comfortless."

He next requested his scholars to be sent for; to these also he made a short address, "reminding them that this was their opportunity if they had any desire to qualify themselves for being of use in the world, and that learning was well worth their attention, but virtue was much more so."

"He next exhorted his servants, and then sent for several persons who had not hitherto profited by his advice according to his wishes, and upon whom he imagined his dying words might have a better effect. His speech began to falter before he finished his exhortation. The remaining hours of his life he spent in prayer and broken conversations with some select friends, mentioning often the consolations of Chris-

tianity, declaring they were the only true ones, and that nothing else could bring a man peace at the last," —and then "he fell asleep in the Lord in great peace the fourth day of March, in the yeare of our Lord 1584, and in the 67th yeare of his age."

He was buried the next day in a grave in the south transept of Houghton Church, where a massive altar tomb was erected to his memory, and which remains to this day. At the west end of the monument the following inscription is cut in raised characters, divided by an escutcheon, on which is relieved a boar with a crescent cut on its side resting against a tree—the Gilpin arms:—

BERNERD	OBIIT QVA
GILPIN RE	RTO DIEM
CTOR HV	ARTII AN
IVS ECCLEAE	DOM 1583.

The entry in the Houghton Register of his death, made at a later date, is as follows:—"Burialls, 1583, March 5.* Mr. Bernard Gilpin, parson of Houghton in the Spring for the space of 26 yeares and 49 weeks, one of the 2 founders of Kepier Schoole in Houghton, who bestowed in building and endowing of the same £460, as appeareth by a note left written by William Airey, son of the half-sister of the said Bernard Gilpin,

* As noticed before, March 5, 1583, according to the old style corresponds to March 5, 1584. Up to 1752 the legal and ecclesiastical year began on March 25. This fact has generally been forgotten in connection with the date of Gilpin's death, which is usually assigned to March 4, 1583, but his letter to Mrs. Carr is dated May 31 1583 (see above, p. 136), and a glance at the Church Register shows that the year 1584 is commenced therein immediately after March 24, 1583.

and his servant, all the space that he was parson of Houghton."

Gilpin's will was made in October 1582, when the plague was raging at Houghton. At that time he was drawing up and witnessing the wills of many of his parishioners who were struck down by the fell disease, and was thus reminded, as he says, "of the frailty and uncertaintie of man's life."

The will was proved on June 3, 1584. It is a lengthy document, and is printed as an appendix to the present Memoirs. As we might expect, it is full of almsgiving. Bequests are made to the poor of nine or ten parishes, including Newcastle, Auckland, Barnard Castle, Sunderland, and Easington, but not including Norton. Five pounds is left to Easington, four pounds to Newcastle, four to Auckland, to Barnard Castle forty shillings, and to Sunderland, then a very little obscure place, fifteen shillings. There are also special legacies; "to every one that keepeth one plowe in Houghton, two shillings, and to those that for the most part keepeth two plowes, three shillings," and to many of his neighbours, friends, and relatives. He leaves to the poor of Houghton "the great arke for corne, standing in the hall" at the rectory, "to provide them groats in winter to be given them in somer, as they have been used in Willm. Scotte's dole." His servants and scholars are all remembered. His books he divides between Queen's College, Oxford, his original college, and the Grammar School. It appears that Mr. "Heugh" Broughton had certain of Gilpin's books, and these he leaves to Queen's, trusting "that he will withhoulde none of them." There are some

curious details of furnitures and fixtures in the rectory which he leaves to his successor, hoping that in consideration of these and of the £300 at least, which he had expended on the house, he "will not demand any thing for dilapidations;" if he does, the poor will suffer, "upon whom chiefly my goods are bestowed in this testament." The Dilapidation Acts date from the 13th of Eliz.* Bishop Barnes had made very heavy claims on the widow of Bishop Pilkington for dilapidations, which probably suggested the insertion of this clause, and yet Barnes is to see that such claims were waived in Gilpin's case. He leaves to the poor of Houghton £20, "and neine of my oxen so equally divided as it is possible;" the other "neine" he gives to his three executors.

To Richard Barnes, "Lord Bishop of Durham, for a simple token of remembrance," he leaves, as mentioned in the previous chapter, "three silver spoones with acorns," and two of his books. Similar remembrances are left to John Heath, his friend in the endowment of the Grammar School, but whom with commendable self-forgetfulness he calls "the founder of the school," and to Mr. Richard Belasis. These last three, the Bishop, and Heath, and Belasis, being requested to act as supervisors of his will, as "a work of Christian charitie."

Then follows a request to them to act as governors of the Grammar School, of the property belonging to which he gives the particulars. Gilpin's theory of the work of a school comes out when he writes here, "I trust I may bouldlie affirme that whatsoever is geaven

* Blunt's *Reformation*, p. 173.

to a godlie Grammar Schole is geaven to the maintenance of Christ's Holy Gospel." In the same spirit Colet set up the image of the child Jesus over the gate of St. Paul's School, with the words "Hear ye Him" graven beneath it.*

The residue of his estate is to be divided between "the poore of Houghton parishe" for the one part, and the other part "to be bestowed in exhibitions upon his schollers and students in Oxforde, by the discretion of my executors, to consider who is most needefule." Such was the substance of Bernard Gilpin's will.

There are a few books named in the will which I enumerate here as a sample of Gilpin's library:—

Eusebius in Greek,
Josephus in Greek,
Fabian's English Chronicle,
Paulus Jovius' History,
Calvin's Opuscula, and
The "Novus Orbis."

The only English work is "Fabian's Chronicle," and that was left to a lady, "Mistresse Heathe" of Kepier.

None of the books he left to the Grammar School are now known to exist; but of those which he bequeathed to Queen's College, Oxford, the following are still in the library:—

Chrysostom in D. Pauli Epist: Græce, 2 vols. Printed at the Episcopal Palace, Verona, 1529.

Psalterium Hebræense, Græcum, Arabicum et Chaldæum, cum tribus Latinis interpretationibus et glossis. Geneva, 1516. Folio.

* Green's *Short History of the English People*, p. 305.

Munsteri Biblia—Hebrew and Latin, Basil, 1535.
Opera A Politiani, edited by Aldo. Pio Manuzio, Venice, 1498. Folio.

This last is a very rare volume, and one of the finest of the Aldine series.

On its title-page are the autographs of William Layton, an uncle of Gilpin's, and of Bernard Gilpin himself, with the following MS. note:—

"Erat hic Willus Layton de Dalemane in comitatu Cumbriæ ad Emontis fluenta, unde et Barnardus Gilpin (qui librum hunc bibliothecæ d), genus maternum duxit."

Two other works are mentioned in the catalogue of benefactions to the college, dated 1659, as given by Gilpin, but they are not now to be found, namely—

Arethas in Apocal. quarto, vol. 2, Verona.
Œcumenius in Act. Apost: et Epistol. Verona.

On the title-page of three of the above volumes is pasted a printed slip of paper with the words:—Liber Collegii Reginæ ex dono Bernardi Gilpini socii ejusdem collegii."

Bishop Carlton describes Gilpin as "tall of stature and slender, being hawke-nosed," and continues: "His clothes were ever such as cost not very deare. He could never away with gay apparell. In things belonging to his owne body he was very frugall, and retained the austeritie of the auncient." He was never married, but he "was wont to commend the marryed estate in the clergy;" "he was careful to avoid not only all evil doing, but even the slightest suspicions thereof. And he was accounted a saint in the judgments of his very enemies if he had any such.

Being full of faith and good workes, he was at the last put into his grave as a heap of wheat in due time swept into the garner." *

Gilpin and his life-work are an excellent commentary upon the fulness of the ministerial vocation; as parson of Houghton he realised to an extent hardly heard of in his day, and with few parallels in our own, the many-sidedness of the parson's duties.

In no other biography of his age have we so full a description of the work of a parish priest and a minister of Christ; and yet we know very little of the details of his labours, and are left asking for more information and fuller particulars.

The affection and influence which he won in his life-time, and the way in which his memory has during three centuries clung to Houghton, are among the best evidences we possess of the extraordinary powers and devotion of the man.

Memorable as an educationist, a philanthropist, a missionary, he is most distinguished as parson of Houghton; they have almost forgotten his name in Tynedale and Readsdale, but it will never be forgotten at Houghton.

As all men should, he went to his parish with the single purpose of devoting all he was and all he had to its best interests, and with the resolve that he would be the guide, friend, helper, and example of his flock; in one word, to be what he was called, "Father Gilpin." †

* Carlton, in Wordsworth's *Eccles. Biog.* iv. pp. 157, 158.

† People called him "Father Gilpin," says Fuller, and he "well deserved it for his paternal affections to all."—Fuller, Bk. ix., cent. xvi. 10–13, Vol. III., p. 107.

He was not a builder or restorer of churches; he may not have provided an extra number of services, nor have introduced an elaborate ritual or splendid music; but he put his head and heart and strength and substance at the service of his parishioners, and what they needed in any shape he always was able and willing ungrudgingly to supply. The vigorous, healthful force of a true and God-fearing man were there, the earnest, hopeful labours of a faithful servant of God, and Houghton felt his power and responded to his work and influence as other parishes respond to a true man.

I do not suppose that in the present day Gilpin could teach us anything about the machinery and organisation of a parish. He had no district visitors, or parochial temperance society, even no Sunday-schools as we understand them, no guilds or sisterhoods, no mothers' meetings or girls' or young men's friendly societies, &c., and apparently he worked Houghton with its widely scattered population, and himself being so frequently absent, with only one curate. Sometimes too his curate can have been only a "weak-kneed" brother; witness that unhappy man who died soon after signing the Articles, it being uncertain, at least to Gilpin, whether drink or signing had killed him; witness another, George Swalwell, who subsequently joined the Church of Rome, and by the brutal laws of the time was executed for his Romanism at Darlington on July 21, 1594, and his body thrown into a hole near the gallows.

Gilpin had few of the agencies and helps which are so common now in working parishes, and his colleagues did sometimes more harm than good. But if we can

learn nothing from him in these respects, he can teach very much needed lessons about the spirit, and devotion, and diligence, and self-sacrifice, which are the essential elements in all good work for God, and which, unlike machinery and organisations, never fail of success.

As parson of Houghton, the young, as the seed of the future, were ever the objects of his most zealous care; he did not see perhaps as clearly as we do the importance of elementary education for every child in his parish, but he did distinctly recognise the necessity that all children should be faithfully taught their duty to God and to their neighbours.

He was ever the wise, prudent, and most generous and unselfish helper of the poor and needy; his purse and goods were at their service; and if they needed advice or protection, they knew they could always rely upon the parson.

"Sint patres pauperum, sint orphanorum, viduarum et oppressorum refugium et tutela," was Cardinal Pole's advice to the clergy in his proposals for winning England back to Rome,* already mentioned, and Gilpin might be supposed to have made these words his rule. He was the father of the poor, the refuge and guardian of orphans and widows and of the oppressed.

The idea of parochial work was almost lost, and Gilpin restored the type; and living as he did at the period when England was shaking herself free from the blunders and vices of mediæval religion for the noble career which lay before her, he supplied an element which otherwise might have been to a large extent

* Poli, *Angliæ Reformatio*, p. 16.

unsupplied, that of the parish clergyman who, holding aloof from argument and controversy, occupies himself in applying the simple truths of the Gospel to the healing of the moral and spiritual diseases of humanity.

Gilpin at an early date in his career had got to the heart of religion in the study of the Gospels and of the Christ therein depicted. And his desire was to make Christ known, to teach his people His spirit and motives, and to act himself as Christ would have acted. The gospel was to Gilpin not a mere creed, but a life, and the breath of that life was love.

Bishop Latimer once said at Paul's Cross to a ring of bishops, "I would ask you a strange question, Who is the most diligent prelate in all England that passeth all the rest in doing of his office? I will tell you, it is the devil." * Gilpin's reply to Bishop Tunstall when he urged him to get a dispensation before he went abroad will be remembered, "The devil will not be restrained by any bonds of dispensation from labouring in mine absence the destruction of the people committed to my charge." Gilpin had a keen scent for the devil's workings, and accurately estimated the forces of the opposition; and if he could help it, the devil should not get the upper hand in Houghton.

We should like to have known more about Gilpin's preaching. His sermon before Edward VI., when a comparatively young man, and before he had the education of parish work, cannot be regarded as any adequate specimen of his style later on in life. A better idea of Gilpin in the pulpit, of what Fuller calls his heavenly

* *Latimer's Sermons*, Parker Society edition, p. 70.

preaching,* may be formed from some of his letters, particularly from that addressed to "gentle Mrs. Carr," as he calls her in the last year of his life (see p. 133); we can understand in this way how loving, how strong, how earnest he could be.

Gilpin lived much in the best society—to wit, that of God, his own heart, and his Bible, but he also lived in a great throng of people, his schoolboys, his guests, his household, his parishioners, his neighbours, and from every source, no doubt to a large extent unconsciously, he was ever equipping himself for his public and private ministration.

His was a full life, always at high-tide, every generous godly faculty was in constant play and exercise; and the people of Houghton, brought into contact with him in a hundred different ways, were ever being refreshed thereby as from a fountain.

Many years after his death, when the present copy of the Burial Register was written, the scribe, whoever he was, when he came to the name of Bernard Gilpin, wrote it in large letters as if to mark his sense of the greatness of the man. A trifle like this shows the trend of popular estimation. This was no common entry, to be lost amid "the rude forefathers" of Houghton, but must stand out on the parchment, as Gilpin himself had stood out, majestic, and observed by all among the living generation of the parish.

In Gilpin's estimation, convenience, self-interest, wealth, position, were not the things to be considered, but the great charge in the cure of souls with which God had entrusted him. Such a charge he rather would

* Fuller's *Church History*, iii. 107.

dread than seek, but when Providence called him to it, it was accepted, though with reluctance; and henceforth its fulfilment became the all-absorbing employment of his life. His natural inclination was to a life of retirement and study, but all this was sacrificed when he had once "put his hand to the plough."

He was popular with the sort of popularity he cared for, that which gave him weight among his people. Mere applause he valued not, and at any moment he would risk his popularity if the declaration of the truth or the branding of a sin required it.

What shall I say of his charity? His life is in every page a monument of this. His desire was to give away in his lifetime whatever he *could* give, as he had often observed with regret the abuse of charitable legacies. "It is my design," he wrote to a friend, "to leave no more behind me but to bury me and pay my debts." And what little he did leave when the end came was bequeathed almost entirely to the poor. A very striking action of Gilpin's should be recorded here, and one which might often be wisely imitated; a legacy had been left to him, but hearing that certain of the relatives of the deceased needed it more than he did, he handed it over to them.

So much for his work as a clergyman. A few words about his personal character.

The grand feature of all his life was, that he lived in the fear of God. Religion was always the leading concern in his mind, and in religion he knew no other end than the glory of God, and the working out of the principles of the man Christ Jesus in daily life.

Day by day he laboured to conform himself and his life to the divine rule.

The providence of God was to him as unquestionable a fact as the sunlight; all things he was certain did "work together for good to those who love God," and misfortunes and sorrow were only blessings in disguise.

His reverence for the Bible was a conspicuous feature in his life. This dated probably from a very early period in his career; he found, as Irving says, "quietness in God's Word when he could find it nowhere else." *

With this reverence for the Bible must be recorded his conscientiousness. By this lamp of the inner light he threaded his way through life, and he kept it well trimmed. We have met in the course of these "memoirs" with many evidences of the deference with which he regarded conscience.

Gilpin was blessed with a strong intellect and a sound judgment. He was a scholar, and a deeply read divine, and that in directions which were not adequately followed out in his days. He had made both Greek and Hebrew his study with a view to reading the Scriptures in the original languages. In modern tongues he must have been well versed having lived so long abroad, and his knowledge of general literature was extensive.

Bishop Carlton records that he read poetry with excellent taste, and was himself no mean poet. It is curious to reflect that in his time the "Faerie Queen" and the plays of Shakespeare were unknown, had never yet seen the light. Indeed at the date of

* Irving's Preface to *Gilpin's Life*, p. xlii.

Gilpin's death English literature can hardly be said to have had any existence. Scarcely an author to be reckoned among the classics of England had appeared in print before 1584, Chaucer only excepted. But such poetry as was attainable Gilpin appreciated, and could rival if not excel, and with all the best books of his day, and up to his day, he was familiar. The staple of the polite literature of that age was excellent translations from the Greek and Latin classics, often sumptuously printed in folio volumes. Other branches of literature, always excepting theology, were little cultivated, saving of course such books as were printed in the learned languages.

One can hardly realise that Gilpin died before the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, and before the Armada, before the introduction of tobacco and potatoes into England, before what we regard as modern history had begun. When he died, Raleigh was already famous, but England had read none of his stately periods, and no English settlements had been established in America. Old things were indeed passing away, but the new were only slowly coming in. "It was only in the latter years of the sixteenth century that the discoveries of Copernicus were brought home to the general intelligence of the world by Kepler and Galileo, and that the daring of the buccaneers broke through the veil which the greed of Spain had drawn across the new world of Columbus." *

In Gilpin's time the floors were still strewed with rushes; Erasmus complained of this practice, and ascribed to it the frequent pestilences which prevailed.

* Green's *Short History of England*, p. 412.

He recommended the entire banishment of rushes and better ventilation. Forks were also rather toys and luxuries than in general use, and manners were in many respects very primitive. For instance, "a merchant's daughter, one Janet Surtees of Durham, would go to St. Oswald's well for a skeil full of wayter," like Rebecca, as a matter of course, and think nothing of it.*

But to return from this digression. Thinking about this man, you can readily discern that he was naturally of a hasty and warm temper, but early in life he had grace to shuffle off the bad parts of this disposition, and had learnt to exercise an admirable restraint, while he retained all the force and motive power of one who could hate strongly and love strongly, and who could take up arms for a noble cause with a courage and energy that commanded success.

In every man who is to become a power in his generation otherwise than by mere writing, I mean in the way of personal intercourse, there must be a strong sympathetic tendency and some sense of humour; he should be able to respond to the feelings of those among whom he may happen to be, and this will show itself in cheerfulness and readiness in society.

It is said of Gilpin that although his disposition was serious, yet among familiar friends he was generally cheerful and often facetious.

Two recent biographies illustrate this qualification in two very different men, Samuel Wilberforce and Charles Lowder, both of them men who ex-

* *Depositions and other Ecclesiastical Proceedings* published by the Surtees Society, p. 296.

ercised a wide personal influence, both of them men who on occasion brimmed over with gaiety and cheerfulness. Herein was without question one of the secrets of their success, or rather an expression of one of the spiritual forces out of which it came; and Gilpin could be the most charming and cheerful of companions. "Cheerfulness," says Irving, "was in his soul because it was in good health." * He could not have been "the Apostle of the North" and the far-famed "Rector of Houghton" had this qualification been lacking.

While his judgments of others were ever humble and indulgent, his judgments on himself were very severe. Great as his zeal was, it was always tempered with wisdom; good sound common-sense ever marked his proceedings. There was no self-conceit or moroseness, but a beautiful humility. Perhaps his meekness and wisdom never came out so strongly as in his troubles with Bishop Barnes; the position was eminently difficult, and self-control and wisdom were essential.

What he accomplished with an income of £400 a year, equal tobetween £3000 and £4000 in our days, is an evidence of his business aptitude. His living was at that time the most valuable in the whole kingdom, but he made it go as far as two or three times as much would with the ordinary slipshod management which is as common in our days as in his. He considered himself as steward of that money not only for himself but for others. On himself he expended very little indeed, the parish got the benefit of his care and economy. He believed that extravagance was only another word for injustice, and he would have none of it. Busy as he

* Irving's Preface to *Gilpin's Life*, p. liii.

was with parish and other work, he always looked after his own affairs, and prevented and restrained everything approaching to waste or over-reaching or imposition.

Often slandered and suffering much from the unkind and uncharitable judgments and actions of others, he would never speak ill of any one, nor judge them otherwise than charitably. "Slander," he used to say, "more deserved the gallows than theft."

Very decided in his own opinions, he could always tolerate differences in non-essentials. In this regard he was very broad in his sympathies and very tolerant. He liked not to tie men down to hard and fast rules, nor to narrow the terms of union in the Church, and so was often incapable of sympathising with most of his contemporaries in their policy; he was ever ready also to concede the same liberty to others which he claimed for himself, and so differences of view on minor points never stopped or prevented friendship.

Edward Irving formed a very just estimate of his character, which he has embodied in his preface to Gilpin's Life. This is from his summing-up. "The breadth of this man's character, the copious wisdom, the various application, the good and common sense which he brought to all spiritual subjects, amaze us. His ministerial character did not denude him of his natural sympathy with all mankind, but rendered him more expansive, and directed them to higher purposes. Cheerfulness was in his soul because it was in good health, and good cheer upon his table, and gifts in his hand until he had no more to give. And withal he was the humblest of men, and found

no satisfaction in his good works or approbation of his own perfection; but had his refuge in the Lord Jesus Christ, where alone he found his peace. Like his Master, he was a sharp sword against the scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites—a place of refuge to the naked and destitute—a shepherd to the flock—a blessing to the young—food to the hungry, and drink to the thirsty; he went about on errands of continual well-doing, and kept constant communion with God, and walked with God." Thus far Edward Irving.

Among Gilpin's admirers must also be reckoned John Wesley. There was much in common between the two men—their zeal in preaching the Gospel to neglected and lapsed populations, their interest in schools, and their unselfish generosity, &c. Wesley published an abridgment of Gilpin's life as one of a series of lives of eminent Christians; and there can be no doubt from its pages that he held Gilpin in the highest estimation. For completeness and clearness of detail, and for purity and elegance of language, this abridgment of Gilpin's life is worthy of all praise, and as an epitome of the story of the Rector of Houghton nothing better could be desired.

Such then was Bernard Gilpin; a saint indeed, in whom was no guile. "If," says Bishop Carlton in his dedication of his Life, "there were many such as Mr. Gilpin was, I should holde it needlesse to recommend the memoriall of this man unto the world. But seeing there are so few who have propounded so notable an example to all those who doe aspire to a blessed life, and constantly walked in the same, I conceive that such a patterne would kindle the zeal of many good

men to walk in so fair a way." For such an end it is well that the story of Gilpin's life should once more be told. We can't afford to forget the lives of our great men; there are by no means too many of them, and each has its special message to the world.

If we would sum up the lessons of Gilpin's life, those which it embalms for the good of men, they are, I think, these—that all godliness is summed up in the one word "love;" that he can't be right whose life is wrong, nor he far wrong whose life is penetrated by the Gospel idea of love to God and man; that the man who seeks truth in order to transplant it into his life, is he who is moving on with sure step towards the soundest orthodoxy; and that God crowns him with approval and success whose aim is ever to be true to his highest convictions, to the truth he has already attained.

To the truth be true; thou canst not then be false to God, to thyself, or to any man.

APPENDIX I.

TESTAMENTUM BERNARDI GILPIN NUPER RECTORIS DE HOUGHTON.*

DA mihi, Domine, secundum tuam assistricem sapientiam, et eripe me de luto hujus mundi, ut non infigar.

In the name of God, Amen, the xvij day of October, and in the yeare of our Lord God, 1582, I, Bernarde Gilpin, person of Howghton-in-the-Springe, weake in body, yet of good remembrance, God be praised, knowinge the frailtie and uncertintie of man's life, and seinge even now before myne eyes, in this tyme of God's visitation † manye and daylie examples of deathe, doe institute and make this my last will and testament, in maner (and) forme followinge. Firste, I bequeathe and commende my soule into the handes of Allmightie God, my Creator, not trustinge in myne owne merites, which am of myselfe a most wretched sinner, but onelie in the mercie of God; and in the merites of Jesus Christ, my Redeamer and Savyoure; for that I am taught by His holie apostles, that there is none other name, under the heaven, gyven to man, wherein we must be saven, but onelye in the name of our Lord and Saviour,

* From *Durham Wills and Inventories*, Published by the Surtees Society, p. 83.

† The plague, always spoken of in wills as the "visitation," was then raging. He witnessed the wills of many of his parishioners who were struck down by the fell disease.

Jesus Christe, neither is there in anye other salvation. My bodie I committe to be buried in the parishe churche, or church-yarde, wheresover it shall please God to call me to His mercie. For the disposition of my goods; first, I will that all my debtes, which I owe, be well and trulie paied, withe sutche speade, as may be convenientlie, the which debtes I shall gather as diligentlie as I can, and set after this my last will and testament. My debtes once paied and dischardged, of that whiche remaynethe, I geave and bequeathe to the poore of Esington parishe 5*l.* Item to the poore of Newcastell 4*l.* Item to the poore of Sunderland 15*s.* Item to the poore of Awcklande 4*l.* Item to the poore of Bernardcastle 40*s.* Item to the poore of Kentmire * 5*l.* Item to the poor of Staveley hamblet 40*s.* Item to the poore of Kendall 40*s.* Item to the poore of Lancaster 4*l.* Item to everie one that keepethe one plowe in Howghton parishe 2*s.* Item to those that, for the most part, keape twoe plowes 3*s.* Item to *Mr. Anthonye Maude*, and *Briget*, his sister, to eyther of them 3*l.* Item to *Bernarde Maude*, their brother, 53*s.* 4*d.* Item to my curate 40*s.* Item to everye of my good children whether they remaine in this parishe, or noe, 2*s.* Item to *Peter Gilpin* to put him to a maister 3*l.* Item to *Mr. Rycharde Wharton* 3*l.* Item to *Mr. Hewghe Ayray*, a preatcher in Devonshire 20*s.* Item to Mr. Steaphen Cooperthwaite 20*s.* Item to *Henrye Ayraye* 40*s.* Item to *George Carleton* 40*s.* Item to Raphe Irenside 12*s.* Item to *Wylyam Cayrus* 3*l.* Item to Mr. John Claveringe 10*s.* Item to Bernard Tompson sonne of Henrye Tompson 20*s.* Item to *Margaret Gilpin*, doughter of Cader Gilpin, 39*s.*, which her brother, Anthonye Gilpin, is owinge to me, by a bill of his hande. Allso, I geave unto her 40*s.* more. Item to my sister, *Mistresse Elizabeth Gilpin*, widow, one

* Kentmire in Westmoreland was his birthplace, and this dictated the Westmoreland bequests.

aungell. Item to *Elinoure Cayrus*, her niece, 30*s.* Item to James Beverley 5*l.* Item to my twoe cosinges, An *Benson* and *An Beverley* to eyther of them 10*s.* Item I geave to *Elizabeth Gilpin* dwellinge in Newcastle, above the 5*l.*, which I doe owe her, for my mother's legacie, other 5*l.* Item to *Elinoure Ayraye*, in Howghton, wedow, 15*s.* Item to *Rycharde Ayraie*, her sone 20*s.* Item to Isabell Lisley 40*s.* Item to *Jane Plaisted*, wedow, in London, my cosin germayne, 40*s.* Item to *Mabell Herrise*, her sister, wedow, dwelling at St. Catheryne's, in London, tennant to Mr. Godfraye Willson, 20*s.* Item I give to *Wylyam Ayray*, of Kentmire, and his three sisters, sonne and doughters to my sister, Elinoure Ayraye, of Kentmire, to everye of theym 10*s.* Item to Cicill Cooperthwayte, wyfe of Gislote Cooperthwaite, 5*s.* Item to the wyfe of *Richard Ayraye*, in Kentmire, wedow, 5*s.* Item to *John Ayraie*, her brother-in-lawe, and *Ewan Ayray*,* her sonne, to eyther of theym 5*s.* Item to the wyfe of *Faranbrace Gilpin*, wedow, 10*s.* Item to *Wylyam Gilpin*,† sone of Faranbrace Gilpin, 20*s.* Item to the poore of Howghton parishe, the greate new arke for corne, standing in the hall, to provide theim grotes in winter, to be given theim in sommer, as they have been used of Wylyam Scotte's dole, if none will make that provision for theim, let it be soulde within a yeare or twoe, and the pryce delt among them, 30*s.* Item I gyve unto my neighbours of Howghton, so manye as have lande in Braidley, in consideracion of their cost and traveyle, in bringinge it into tillaidge, unto Mr. John Cason, unto John Browne, unto wedow Irenside,

* The lack of uniformity in spelling is very striking; within a few lines the name Ayray is spelled in three different ways.

† All the names in italics are those of relatives, or of connections by marriage. One of his sisters married an Ayray, another a Maude, another a Wharton, a niece married a Cayrus, and an aunt a Plaisted. Henry Ayray became Provost of Queen's College, Oxford, and was a learned and distinguished man. George Carlton, the son of a cousin of Gilpin's, became Bishop of Chichester; he died in 1628.

unto George Tunstall, unto John Chilton, unto Wylyam Ayraie, unto John Johnson, unto the heire and executoure of Thomas Bee, unto everie of these eight 5*s.* Item unto Wylyam Wilkeyson 3*s.* Item unto wedow Trewghit, and the wyfe of Wylyam Laxe, to either of theim 2*s.* Item I give unto Mr. George Gilpin in consideracion of the lease of this personaidge, which he should have had, if God call me before he have it and enjoye it, 16*l.* Item I gyve to everye servannt about my house, a quarter waidge, more than their dewe. Item to everye scholler dwellinge within my house, 3*s.* Item to everie scholler of the parishe, cominge usuallie to the schole, 12*d.* And allso to schollers of other parishes, I gyve to everye one 8*d.* Item I gyve to Wylyam Ayraie,* my servannt, 6*l.* Item to Isabell, his wyfe, 20*s.* Item to Christabell Ayraye his daughter 40*s.* Item to Ewan Ayraie, his sonne, if he remaine a yeare at Oxeforthe 5*l.* Item to Gislote Gilpin 20*s.* Item I gyve to the Queene's Colledge in Oxeforthe, all suche bookes, as shall have written upon the first leafe, *Bernardus Gilpin, Reginensi Collegio, D.D.*, and all suche bookes, as have written upon the firste leafe, *Johannes Newton, Reginensi Collegio, D.D.*,† and all the bookes that Mr. Hewghe Browghton hathe of mine, that is to saie, Eusebius, Grecè, in twoe volumes, and Josephus, Grecè, in one volume, with certayne other little bookes; I trust he will withhoulde none of theym. And I geave to Keipere schole, in Howghton, all suche bookes as shall have the name of it in the first leafe, in the middest, and in the latter ende, to the intent, that no man defraude that schoole, which I pray God longe to keepe and maintaine. Item I geave and leave to my successor,

* Willlam Ayray was Gilpin's servant and the son or nephew of his half-sister. He was his companion generally in his missionary journeys in Northumberland.

† Of these books Reuchlin's Dictionarium Hebræum and Galatinus contra Judæos are still at Queen's College.

the person of Howghton, and to his successors, persons of Howghton, after him, all suche goodes and implementes, as folowe hereafter. In primis, in the brewhowse, the great new brewinge leade, with keelefat, gilefat, and maskfatte. Item in the kilne, a lardge and new steape leade, which receavethe a chaulder of corne at once. Item in the larder howse, one greate saltinge tubbe, which will houlde fower oxen or more. Item in the great chamber, over the parloure, one longe table, and a shorter, standinge upon joyned frames. Item one painted hanginge. Item in the parloure, one longe table upon a joyned frame, and a cupbourde allso. Item one fowre-footed fourme in the parloure. Item plaine bed-stockes vij or viij. Item in the hall, three tables, standinge fast, withe formes to theym. Item in the butterie, one lardge oulde cupbourde, withe a partition in the middest. Item in the lowe parloure, one cupbourde, and in the chamber, over the lowe parloure, one cupbourde, and in the studie, within that chamber, one cupbourde, and in the chappell, covered with leade, joined to the same chamber, one cupbourde. Item in the litle studie, within the tower chamber, one cupbourde. Item in the back howse, twoe tables. Item in the kitchin twoe tables. Item, if I have any lyme or slates, within my howse, when God callethe me, I will that they remayne to my successours, without any price; and if any unwrought timber be remaining, I will that my successour shall have the first offer, by a reasonable price. And I leave unto him all the wainscot, which I made in the east ende of the great parlour, with three lockes and keis over the fyre, if they be not lost. And I leave him all the wainscot, which I made in the east ende of the great chamber, over the parloure, and in the studie joyninge to the same. Item I leave unto him one cundithe of leade, which was made of new. In consideracion of all these, and allso in consideracion of my exceedinge great chardges, in

buildinge and reparaciones, since my first comminge and enterannce unto this personaidge, which, I thinke, withe a safe conscience, I maye well say, amountethe well towardes three hundrethe poundes, if I saye no more; there be workemen, manye yet alive, beside all those who are dead, in the Newcastle, in Durham, in Awcklande, in this parishe, some in Yorkshire, some in Lancashire, some in Kendall, some in Westmoreland, whiche can be true witnesses how greate and manifoulde chardges I have susteyned, with all the buildinges within these walles, and withe the walles allso. All this I saie considered, I trust my successor will not demaunde anie thinge for delapidations, and if he shoulde, I doubt nothinge, but that the reverende father in God, my lorde the bishope of Durham, patrone and giver of this benefice, will persuade him to be content withe reason, and to doe all thinges with charitie, and if charitie may beare rule, I doubt not but that all delapidationes will fall. And heare I most hartilie desire him that shalbe my successor, not onelie to let all the delapidations fall upon these consideracions, afore written, and also in favoure of the poore, upon whome, chieflie, my goodes are bestowed in this testament, but allso that he wilbe a continuall defender and mayntener of Keipier schole,* in Howghton, both in seeinge the statutes well kept, and the children to be brought up, both in vertue and good learninge, so that their profit in good letters may daylie appeare, which if he doe, I doubt not but God shall prosper him the better, in all thinges he takethe in hande, and he shall doe a most acceptable worke, both to my lorde of Durham, patrone of this schole, and to Mr. John Heathe, founder of the same, and to all his neighbours of the parishe. Item I geave to the poore of Howghton parishe 20*l.*, and niene of mine oxen, so equallie

* It will be observed how often the Grammar School is mentioned in this will. There was nothing which Gilpin had so much at heart as its success and continued maintenance.

divided as it is possible; the other nien oxen I geave to my three cosinges, George Gilpin, Randall Gilpin, and Christopher Wharton, whom I make executours of this my last will and testament. And for the more equall devision of the same, I desire sixe of the xxiiij formest written in the booke, with the fower churchwardens and collectours to be for the poore, and to devide mine eighten oxen into two equal partes, so equall as may be, and my executours to pay a noble to the poore, and so to have the choyse. The niene which are for the poore, I will that they be prised by the sixe above mencioned, with the churchwardens and collectours, within *2s.* of their price, under, not above, and so soulde for a yeare daye to niene husbandes of the parishe, upon sufficient bondes and assurance, for the paiement thereof, when it shalbe demanded. And I will that everie yeare, so longe as the *20l.* above gyven, and the price of these niene oxen will last, *10l.* yearelie to be distributed amonge the poore of this parishe, at suche time as they thinke convenient, these niene, which I thinke most needefull, to have the oxen, shalbe written in the ende of my will. Item I give to the right reverende father in God, Richarde, lord bishope of Durham,* for a simple token of remembrance three silver spoones, with acornes, and allso I give unto him the historie of Paulus Iovius, and allso Opuscula Calvini, gathered together in one lardge volume. And allso I give unto Mr. John Heathe, esquire, for a like remembrance, other twoe silver spoones, with acornes, of the same sort and weight, and allso I give unto him the historie of John Sleden, in latine, and to his bedfelowe, Misstress Heathe, I gyve my English cronicle of Fabian. And I gyve to Mr. Richarde Belassis, esquire, for a like remembrance, other

* Bishop Barnes; this bequest is only one of several indications in this document of the kindly terms on which Gilpin was with Barnes in the latter years of his life: a very true friendship was cemented between the two in the parlour at Houghton.

twoe silver spoones, with acornes, of the same weight and fashion, and allso I gyve unto him my historie, called Novus Orbis. And I most humblie beseche these three men, of honoure and worshippe, that, for Gode's cause, they will take so muche paine, as to become supervisours of this my last will and testament, whiche beinge a worke of Christian charitie, I trust verelie they will not refuse; and, above all other thinges, I most humblie besieche theim to take unto their tuition, custodie and governance, all the whole landes and revenues, belonginge unto Keipier schole, in Howghton, bothe more and lesse, with all maner of deades, evidences, giftes, surrendours, obligations, and all other writinges, which, by anye meanes, doe make for the good assurance of the same. All the right, interest, and titles of anye parte or parcell thereof, that if it did belonge unto me by anie maner or meanes, I wholie give it up into their handes, for the good maintenannce and continuannce of the said schole. And for the better knowledge of the same, heare I thinke it neadefull to expresse all the names of theym. First of all, Mr. John Heathe hathe given freelie, unto the findinge of a scholemaister, the Gelie teinde * of Bishop Wermouthe, which is latten yearelye for 8*l.*, and he hathe allso gyven to the findinge of the saide scholemaister, three penscions out of the personaidge of Riton, Wickham, and Gaiteside, the yearelie valewe of 5*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* The landes which I boughte of Mr. Heathe, for the findinge of an usher, and three poore schollers, are these. First of all, the Gellie teende * of Esington, with a garthe, and allso the Gellie teende * of Chester, and allso the Gellie teende * of Whitbourne, Clidon, and Ryop, which as they are letten, are about 8*l.* to the usher, and 5*l.* to three poore schollers, for all these I did paye unto Mr. John Heathe, first and last, the full sume of 240*l.*, the whiche, if it shoulde fortune

* The tithes formerly belonging to the dissolved hospital of St. Giles, at Kepyer, near Durham.

the saide schole to be dissolved, whiche God forbid, my minde and will is, that it retourne wholie to the parishe of Howghton into the handes of the gentlemen, the xxiiij, and the churchwardens to be bestowed either for the findinge of a scholemaister, so longe as it will last, or els to be bestowed in so manye yeares as they thinke good, upon all the poore of the parishe, havinge consideracion, as well upon poore husbandmen, beeinge behinde hande, as upon colemen, and other poore of the parishe. Beside this, I bought of Mr. Thomas Mellotte a whyte rent of seaven nobles by the yeare, out of the landes of Penshire and Pelowe, for the whiche we have verie good evidence. Allso, I bought of Mr. Roger Rawes, merchannte, of the Newcastell, and of his wyfe's children, one fyne in Howghton, called the Whyte Howse: * I paied to Mr. Rawes, for it, the sume of 15*l.*, since that, it hathe coste me, in reparacones and other chardges, well toward 5*l.*: it is surrendred by Mr. Rawes and his children, but it remaynethe still unfined to the schole, till my lorde's pleasure be knowen, bothe for it and sutche others. Allso, I bought of Mr. James Lisle, and his mother, one other fyne, lyinge unto the churchyarde, upon the east side, and at the ende of the schole and garthinge, for this I payed, to Mr. Lisle and his mother 15*l.*, of this I remaine fyner myselfe trustinge that it shoulde or nowe have bene fyned unto the schole and governours thereof; if God shalle call me to His mercie, afore it be surelie anexed to the schole and governours thereof, I chardge those, that are next of myne kine, even as they will aunswere at the last daye, if they have or seame to have, by me, anye title or clayme either unto this fine, or to anye other parcell of revenues, bought for the schole, that they so sone as maye be convenientlie, doe cleareli geave up, and make surrender

* By the statutes of the School it is provided that the master, if married, shall have the White House "with the appurtenances for his wfe and children to dwell in."

into the handes of the governours for the use of the saide schole, all suche title and clayme, as they either have or or maye seme to have thereof. Allso I bought a fine in Wolsingham of Sir Robert Browne, sometime minister of Wolsingham and of Jane his wyfe, whiche liethe to the side of Wolsingham Parke called Jackwalkenfielde, for the whiche I have paied to the saide Sir Robert, and his wyfe, the summe of 44*l.*: the surrender of it was made into the handes of my servaunt Wyliam Ayraie, but I have bounde him in a bonde of 80*l.* to make surrender of it agayne into the handes of the governours of the schole, whensoever he shal be required; this bonde remainethe amonge the writinges and evidences of the schole. These three fines bought by me, twoe in Howghton, and one in Wolsingham, if they cannot be made sure unto the schole, my full minde and will is, that they may be soulde, and the price thereof delivered into the handes of the gentlemen the xxiiij, and churchwardens of Howghton parishe, to be bestowed by theyre discretion, upon the poore of Howghton parishe, or upon the schole and poor schollers of the same, as they shall think most neadefull and expedient. Allso there is geaven unto our fundation out of the lands of Cocken, by Mr. Wylyam Carre, of blessed memorie, a rent of fyve markes by the yeare, whereof 40*s.* is assigned to be bestowed upon the schole, or upon the schollers of the schole, the other foure nobles is apoynted yearlie to be bestowed upon the poor of Howghton parishe, for this we have verie good deades and evidences. There is allso given to our fundation, out of the towne chamber of the Newcastle, by the gift and apoyntment of Mr. John Francklein, of blessed memorie, one pension of foure nobles by the yeare, to be paied all at one payment, about St. Andrewe day afore Christmasse and to be bestowed wholie amonge the poore of Howghton parishe, for this we have no evidence to shewe but onelie a writinge of Mr. John Francklein written all

withe his owne hande, withe his name subscribed, but no seale, these giftes I truste will stande sure inoughe, so longe as they, that are heires to the gyvers, may see them fayth-fullie bestowed upon the schole and schollers, and upon the poore of Howghton parishe, according to the minde and good meaninge of the givers; otherwyse, if anye shoulde go about subtillie to withdrawe from suche a good and goodlie use the good gyftes of theyre ancestours, or anye part thereof, they may be sure that that mightie Lorde, whiche sent downe His plague upon Ananias and Saphira and upon manie other since that time for defraudinge and therbie hinderinge of His holie Gospell, His hande is not shortned but that He will still send His grevous plagues upon all suche as seek to withdraw anye livinge gyven to the maintennance of His holie Gospell; and I truste I may bouldlie affirm, that whatsoever is geaven to a godlie grammar schoole, it is geaven to the maintenance of Christe's holie Gospell. And for as muche, as these landes and revenues are not so surelie established, and in all things confirmed, as I woulde wishe, I gieve unto Keipier Schole in Houghton for the mayntenance thereof, the summe of 20*l.*, the whiche I humblie desire the right reverende father in God, Richarde, bishop of Durham, to take wholie unto his handes, and to bestowe it, as he shall se cause, upon men learned in the lawes, as well upon all those whiche have traveyled and taken paynes therein alredie, in makinge and finishinge a new corporation from his lordship, or in anye other mater, belonginge to the same, or allso upon those whiche hereafter shall traveill therein, to make all thinges so perfect and sure as they maye by theyre learninge, for the longe continutance of the sayde schole, to God's holie will and pleasure. Moreover I gyve to the reperations of Keipier schole, in Howghton 6*l.*, to be remitted unto the governours of the said schole, prayinge theym oftentymes to visite the saide schole, to see what is amisse, that it may be amended, and

God will rewarde theym for theire godlie traveyle. And I make and assigne witnesses of this my last will, John Arcle, and Robert Burdein, of Ryope, and I gyve to eyther of them 5*s*. And I gyve unto Thomas Mabson, my scholler. wryter of this my last will, 6/8. Allso, I give unto Mr. Christopher Ranson, scholemaister of Keipier schole, and to Frauncis Reisley, usher of the same, unto eyther of them 20*s*. All the reast of my goodes and chattels whatsoever, whiche eyther are in my present occupation and possession, or whiche may be, by my will and testament gyven or devysed, my debts, legacies, and funerale expences dischardged, I will that they be devided into twoe equal partes, and the one parte of theym to be gyven to the poore of Howghton parishe; the other parte I will that it be bestowed in exhibition upon the scholleres and studentes in Oxenford, hereafter named, by the discretion of my executors to consider who is most needfull. Their names are theyse. Mr. *Richard Wharton*,* Mr. Steaphen Cooperthwaite, *George Carleton*, Raphe Irenside, *Ewan Ayraye*, *Henry Ayraye*, *Wylyam Cayrus*, Frauncis Reisley, Thomas Collinson. These I will to be releived as myne executors shall see theym neadefull, a yeare, twoe, or three, as the summe will arise, provided allwayes that if, in the meane tyme, the governours of the schole shall want money, to maynteyne the schole, myne executours shall deliver unto theym, as they shall see neadefull and expedient, a portion of this latter part, assigned to schollers in Oxeforde. And for my three executors, for so muche, as I have beńe beneficiall unto theym, in my lyfe tyme, even so far as good conscience would suffer me, and sometyme furtheir, (but God, I trust, hathe forgyven me), I will, and I doubt not, but that they will agree to the same, that they be content with nien oxen, whiche I have gyven them in legacie before,

* Of the nine students four, those whose name are printed in italics, were relatives of Gilpin. All the italics in this will are mine.

to be equallie devided amonge them, the oxen, or the price, as they shall thinke best, and agree amonge theymselves. And if anie gaynes will arise in the sale of my goodes, whiche are to be soulde, because I thinke I have priced theym under the worthe, I will that they shall have that, equallie, amongest theym, but so, that I earnestlie request and desire them, to be goode withe my poore neighbours of the parishe, beinge desirous to buye sutche thinges as they stand most neade of. The supervisours of this my last will, as is mencioned before, are the right honorable and reverende father in God, Rycharde, lorde of Durham, and Mr. John Heathe, of Keipier, esquire, and Mr. Rycharde Belassis, of Morton, esquire. The witnesses of the same are there before named, John Arcle and Robart Burdein, yeomen.

Proved May 16, 1584.

APPENDIX II.

EXTRACTS from the Registers of Kendal and other Parishes, bearing on the marriage connections and migrations of the Gilpin family during the latter half of the 16th, and early in the 17th century, supplied by the Rev. C. Best Norcliffe, of Langton Hall, Malton.

FROM KENDAL REGISTERS.

1560. *Marriages.*

April 9. John Gilpin and Elizabeth Dodding.

1570.

Nov. 9. James Gilpin and Isabel Mitchell.

Nov. 29. Christopher Gilpin and Margaret Shepherd.

Dec. 11. Allan Gilpin and Margaret Moser.

1579.

Sept. 5. Randall Gilpin and Margaret Wharton.

1582.

Nov. 24. James Gilpin of Sleddal and Mabel Shepherd.

1585.

April 25. Rowland Gilpin and Elizabeth Birkett of Highgate.

Aug. 1. Nicholas Gilpin and Isabel Harrison of Skelsmer.

Aug. 8. Ewan Ayrey and Ellinor Gilpin of Kentmer.

Nov. 14. Arthur Gilpin and Jennet Wilson of Sleddal.

1586.

May 24. Thomas Gilpin and Agnes Gilpin of Skelsmer.

Aug. 13. Oliver Gilpin and Margaret Rowlandson of Sleddal.

Aug. 21. Richard Atkinson and Anne Gilpin of Kentmer.

Oct. 16. Peter Gilpin and Margaret Stainton.

1586–7.

Feb. 28. Thomas Bateman and Christabel Gilpin of Underbarrow.

1587.

July 15. Robert Gilpin and Margaret Cowper of Sleddal.

Nov. 7. Hugh Gilpin and Margaret Shepherd of Sleddal.

1587–8.

Jan. 20. Allan Gilpin and Jennet Brabbin of Strickland Field.

Feb 4. (?) Robert Gilpin and Margaret Bownes of Kentmer.

1591.

Sept. 25. Cather Gilpin and Agnes Roberts of Underbarrow.

1591-2.

Jan. 22. Edward Gilpin and Agnes Birket of Underbarrow.

1592.

Aug. 12. Edward Bradley and Cicill Gilpin of Sleddal.

Dec. 21. Edward Gilpin and Isabel Newbie of Underbarrow.

1593.

June 24. Thomas Gilpin and Margaret Dixon of Stramongate.

1594.

Nov. 2. Jason Gilpin and Alice Ward of Skelsmer.

1595.

June 12. John Gilpin and Isabella Chamber of Staveley.

Dec. 23. Christopher Gilpin and Anne Gilpin of Kentmere.

1595–6.

Jan. 31. Nicholas Ward and Mary Gilpin of Skelsmer.

1596–7.

Jan. 16. Thomas Gilpin and Agnes Scale of Stramongate.

Jan. 29. Nicholas Gilpin and Anne Staynbank of Highgate.

Feb. 2. Lenard Gilpin and Isabell Bruthwaite of Skelsmer.

1597.

June 3. Allan Gilpin and Janet Copperthwaite of Kentmere.

June 11. Bryan Jopson and Agnes Gilpin of Sleddal.

Sept. 24. Thomas Gilpin and Agnes Thompson of Strickland Ketel.

1598.
May 2. Thomas Gilpin and Margaret Gilpin of Skelsmer.
1598–9.
Mar. 16. James Benson and Margaret Gilpin of Stramongate.
1599.
Aug. 19. Gyles Gilpin and Dorothy Dobson of Highgate.
1606.
Sept. 6. Robert Crosfield and Dorothy Gilpin of Strickland.
1609.
Nov. 20. Richard Jackson and Anne Gilpin of Underbarrow.
1610.
June 6. Thomas Gilpin and Elizabeth Fox of Kendal.
1612.
June 6. James Gilpin and Jennet Tunstall of Kendal.
July 14. Charles Ayrey and Ann Gilpin of Kentmer.
1616.
July 1. Allan Gilpin and Margaret Birkett of Kendal.
1623.
April 26. William Guy and Hellen Gilpin of Helsington.
1625.
May 15. Arthur Myers and Dorothy Gilpin of Kendal.

REGISTER OF NEWBALD, E. RIDING OF YORK.

1623. *Marriage.*
Nov. 24. Bernard Gilpin and Ann Robinson of Hull.

REGISTER OF ST. JOHN'S, BEVERLEY.

1671. *Baptism.*
April 9. Alexander s. —— Gilpin of Moscroft, bp.
1670–1. *Burial.*
Jan. 16. Thomas s. Thomas Gilpin of Moscroft, bur.

REGISTER OF ALL SAINTS', PAVEMENT, YORK.

1555. *Baptisms.*

Oct. 5. John s. Edward Gilpin, Merchant, bp. (buried 2d August 1557.)

1556.

Dec. 31. Isabella d. Edward Gilpin, bp.

1558.

April 2. Joan d. Edward Gilpin, bp.

1559.

May 9. John s. Edward Gilpin, bp.

1560.

Aug. 31. George s. Edward Gilpin, bp.

1561–2.

Jan. 6. Tristram s. Edward Gilpin, bp.

1563.

April 12. Peter s. Edward Gil bp.

1569. *Burial.*

Sept. 9. Mary d. Edward Gilpin, buried.

INDEX.

ACT of the Six Articles, 17
AIRAY, William, Gilpin's servant and kinsman, 163, 230
ANTICHRIST, is the Pope? 68
APPEALS to Rome forbidden, 7
ARCHERY at Houghton School, 187
ARTICLES of 1569, and Oath of Supremacy, 119
  Gilpin preaches before the Commissioners, 119
ATKINSON'S life of Gilpin, Pref. vii

BARNES, Ambrose, life of, quoted, 242
  his kindness to Richard Gilpin, 244
BARNES, Bishop, educating his clergy, 85
  his opinion of the Durham people and clergy, 231
  measures for the good of his diocese, 232
  sends for Gilpin to preach, 236
  suspends Gilpin, 237
  again bids him preach, 239.
  Gilpin's sermon before, 238
  his apology to Gilpin, 240
  attempted explanation of his conduct, 242
  afterwards Gilpin's friend, 243
  rupture with the Dean and Chapter, 245
BARNES, John, Gilpin's opposition to him, 136, 233
  right-hand man to Bishop Barnes, 232
BARNES, John, denounced in Gilpin's sermon, 239, 241
BEDFORD, Lord, a friend of Gilpin, 50
BELLASIS, Mrs. Margery, of Morton House, 145
BERNARD, the name continued in the Gilpin family and branches, Pref. xi
BIBLE, Gilpin on the, 51
BILLINGHAM, Vicar of, appointed to charge of Norton, 56
BISHOPS, all but one refused to conform when Elizabeth became Queen, 117
  many of Elizabeth's Bishops returned exiles and Puritans, 197
BONNER, Bishop, Gilpin sent to him, 108
  his character, 109
BOOKS left by Gilpin, 273, 292
BOWES, Sir G., Commissioner for punishing the rebels of 1569, 209
  his cruel execution of cruel orders, 210
  had lost much property by the rebels, 213
"BRETHREN," at Oxford, 6
BROUGHTON, Hugh, Gilpin meeting him, 191
  his ingratitude to Gilpin, 235
  made Canon of Durham, 230
  covets the living of Houghton, 236
  he leaves the diocese, his end, 241

BURLEIGH, Lord, attracted to Gilpin, 52
his account to Queen Elizabeth of the irregularities in Church ordinances, 197
visits Houghton Rectory, 215
his farewell to it, 216

CAMERON, the evangelist in Annandale, 160
CARLTON'S life of Gilpin, Pref. v
CARR, Gilpin's letter to Mrs., 133
CARTWRIGHT'S Puritan works, 202
CARTWRIGHT and Archbishop Whitgift, 204
CHEDSEY, Dr., 25, 259
CHRONOLOGICAL difficulties in Gilpin's appointments, 97
CLERGY, condition of the, 79, 80, 81
most of them conformed, 80
non-residence and pluralities, 82
Bishop Barnes educating the, 85
Archbishop Parker on an unlearned clergy, 175
if not licensed to preach, to teach the elementary subjects, 176
marriage of the, 186 *note*.
irregularities in conducting services, 197
not hearty in the Reformation in 1569, 208
COLET preaching before Henry VIII., 46
his Grammar School, 171
his educational ideas, 172
the opposition to St. Paul's School, 173
CROMWELL, Thomas, in power, 7
CURATE of Houghton and Articles of 1569, 121

DILSTON HALL, Consumption of malt there, 139, *note*.
DOUAY, Seminary priests from, 247
DURHAM, condition of the clergy and people, 76
clergy opposed to Gilpin, 79
most of them conformed under Elizabeth, 80
Rebels at, in 1569, 207
Conduct of Canons and Minor Canons, 207
quarrel between the Chapter and Bishop Barnes, 245
disgraceful conduct of the Chapter, 245
Gilpin's accident in the market-place, 268
Cromwell's scheme for a university of, 244
Cathedral, the Gilpin window, Pref. xii

EASINGTON, Gilpin appointed to, 77
EDUCATION, ideas on, in Gilpin's time, 173
provision for, 176, 186
elementary subjects, 173
what was meant by it, 176
provision for teaching the Catechism, 177
and the religious element, 186, 193
EDWARD VI., commencement of his reign, 22
Sends Peter Martyr to Oxford, 23
Gilpin's sermon to his empty chair, 45
his eighteen Grammar Schools, 172
on education, *note*, 176
ELIZABETH, Queen, her caution and moderation, 116
Cecil's account to her of clerical nonconformity, 197
excommunicated by the Pope, 213
her conduct to Bishop Pilkington, 222
Lever's advice to her, 225
ELLINGHAM, living of, 245

ERASMUS' Greek Testament at Oxford and Cambridge, 5
ERASMUS, Moriæ Encomium, 6
his desire to place Christ before the world, 12
would have the new Testament read everywhere, 13
fears revolution from Luther's reform, 17
his New Testament, 20
his opinion of Tunstall, 53
on Tynedale, 159
his opinion of Colet's School, 172

FERALATÆ silve, 188
FEUD, the deadly, 157
FOX, John, Canon of Durham, 224
FRANKFORT, troubles at, 71

GALTON on the Gilpins, Pref. viii
GENISON, Mr., and Gilpin, 260
GILPIN Family, Pref. vi, vii
GILPINS in America, Pref. ix.
GILPIN, BERNARD :—
His biographers, Pref. v.
Birth, family and homestead, 1, 2
and the drunken Friar, 3
goes to Queen's College, Oxford, 4
a disciple of the new learning, 9
desires reform from within the church, 10
becoming distinguished at Oxford, 12
studies Erasmus, 12
studies the Bible in original languages, 14
elected a Fellow of his college, 15
joins Christ Church, 15
and Luther, 16, 259
attending to moral abuses, but zealous for doctrine, 17
driven into a stricter Romanism, 18
on the Papal Supremacy, 18, 19
learnt his faith at his mother's knee, 20
GILPIN, Bernard, studying Erasmus' New Testament, 20
disputation with Peter Martyr, 24
Peter Martyr's opinion of Gilpin, 26
studies the controversy carefully, 25
on the Presence in the Eucharist, 28
on the Supremacy, 28
on the stereotyping of Trent, 29
Scripture his guide, 30, 128
on Romish doctrine of Tradition, 31
letter to his brother George, 33
appointed to Norton, 44
goes down there, 54
his sermon before Edward VI., 46
wins him friends in Lords Bedford, Leicester, and Burleigh, 50, 52
on the iniquities of Rome, 50
on the Scriptures, 51
licensed to preach throughout the kingdom, 52
at Norton, 54
uneasy about certain doctrines, 55
Tunstall's advice to him to go abroad, 55
will not derive any profit from Norton in his absence, 56
declines a dispensation, 57
charged by Tunstall to print some books for him, 59
visits his brother George at Mechlin, 61
goes to Louvain, 61
offers to him from Tunstall, 63
his letter declining a living, 63
removes to Paris and prints Tunstall's books, 66
meets with Neal at Paris, 66
observing the evils of Popery abroad, 67
is the Pope antichrist? 68
returns to England, 69, 72
hopes of a reform within the Church of Rome, 69

GILPIN, Bernard, proceeds to the Diocese of Durham, 74
appointed to Easington and the Archdeaconry, 77
his views at this time, 77
his work at Easington, 78
opposition of the clergy, 79
reproving the vices and neglect of the clergy, 84
a very unpopular Archdeacon, 87
warned by Bishop Tunstall of the danger he incurred, 88
accused of heresy, 88
acquitted by Tunstall, 89
resigns Easington and the Archdeaconry, 90
residing with Bishop Tunstall; debates with the Bishop's chaplains, 91
hopes of reform from within dying out, 92
a sad time for him towards the end of Mary's reign, 95
appointed to Houghton-le-Spring, 97, 130
chronological difficulties, 97
restoring Houghton Rectory, 104
declines a canonry of Durham, 106
again charged with heresy, 107
his case remitted to Bonner, 108
warned to escape, 109
prepares for martyrdom, 110
his broken leg, and death of Mary, 112
called "Apostle of the North and common father of the poor," 114
now a free man and unfettered, 114
preaches before Commissioners of 1569, 119
hesitates, but at last subscribes the Articles, 120
appointed a Commissioner, 121
offered Bishopric of Carlisle, refuses it, 122
why he declined it, 124
GILPIN, Bernard, urged to be Provost of Queen's College, 126
resolves on having a grammar school, 131
his work at Houghton, 131
letter to Mrs. Carr, 133
his opposition to John Barnes, 136, 233
his hospitality and charity, 139
value of his living, 141
visiting and succouring prisoners, 142, 168
guarding the revenues of his living, 143, 144
carefulness in money matters, 144
his friends in the neighbourhood, 145
his sermons at Houghton, 147
an itinerant preacher, 157
his work in Tynedale and Readsdale, 162
at Rothbury, 164
the challenge glove, 165
wins the hearts of the Dalesmen, 167
his object in founding a grammar school, 173
obtains a charter, 178
date of opening the school, 179
cost of building and endowment to him, 179
Heath contributes to endowment, 180
anxiety about settling the endowment, 180
revising the school statutes, 184
his interest in the school, 191, 193
meeting Hugh Broughton, 191
and the Puritans, 199–203
during Rebellion of 1569, 210, 211
destruction of his property by the Rebels, 212
intercedes for them, 213
order and piety of his household, 215
his friends—Bishop Pilkington, 122; Thomas Lever, 214

GILPIN, Bernard, a great rider, 225
stays at Biddick during the plague, 226
a question of conscience, 228
his relative William Airay, his servant, 230
one of the select preachers of the Diocese, 233
ingratitude of Hugh Broughton to, 235
sent for by Bishop Barnes to preach, 236
suspended by the Bishop, 237
threatened with a sequestration, 237
sent for again to preach, 238
his sermon before the Bishop, 238
Barnes apologises to Gilpin, 240
friendly with Barnes, 243
legacies to Barnes, 243
and the Dean and Chapter, 245, 246
Romanists try to win him back to Popery, 247
letter to Selsthorp, 248
—on the Catholic Church, 252
—on Transubstantiation, 252
—on the Sacraments, 254
—on Prayers for the Dead, 255
—on invocation of Saints, 255
—on fasting, &c., 259
and Genison, 260
and Wren, 263
slandered in many ways, 265
growing more feeble and in ill health, 267
accident in Durham market-place, 268
his death, 270
his tomb, 270
his will, 271, 289
his books, 273
his appearance and habits, 274
his character, 275
his reverence for the Bible, 281
legacies to places and persons, 290
GILPIN, Bernard, legacies to the poor of Houghton, 291
how he left his books, 292
leaves "furnishings" to his successor, 293
deprecates charge for dilapidations, 294
disposing of his 18 oxen, 295
giving directions about the School property, 296
desires it to be made sure, 299
collateral descendants of, Pref. xi
GILPIN, Richard, of Greystoke, also offered and refused the Bishopric of Carlisle, 125, 243
his character and learning, 243
Ambrose Barnes' kindness to him, 244
GILPIN, William, his Life of Gilpin, Pref. v.
as a schoolmaster, 195, *note*
GLOVE, the challenge, 165
GOLDSMITH'S "Village Preacher" quoted, 138
GRAMMAR SCHOOL, Gilpin decides to establish one, 131
what it is, 174
of Houghton, opened and chartered, 178, 182
description of, 179
why called Kepier School, 179
cost of building and endowing, 180
Heath helps to endow, 180
statutes of, 183
extracts from, 185
provisions for recreation, 187
statutes not binding, 189
distinguished scholars, 192
school property, 296
GRIMSHAW of Haworth, an itinerant preacher, 151

HARDWICK, Lord, decision on the Houghton School Statutes, 189

HEATH, of Kepier, contributes to endowment of the Grammar School, 180
HENRY VIII., declared "Supreme Head of the Church," 7
and Dean Colet's sermon, 44
HOUGHTON LE SPRING, Gilpin appointed to, 97
description of, 101
condition of the people, 103
Gilpin restores and enlarges Rectory, 104
value of the living, 141
its good Rector, 146
educating the young, how provided for, 178
Grammar School, 178, &c.
Rectory and its guests, 215
Lord Burleigh's visit, 215
a day at the Rectory, 216
Gilpin's altar tomb in the church, 270
Gilpin's legacies to the poor of, 291
HUTCHINSON on Gilpin, Pref. vi

IRVING, Edward, on Bernard Gilpin, Pref. vi. 137, 286
ITINERANT preachers, 151

KENTMERE Hall, 2
KEPIER School, why so called, 179
KNOX, John, preaching in the marches of Scotland, 151
on education, 173

LATIMER, on clerical neglect, 82
LAW, Gilpin kept his people from going to, 133
LEICESTER, Lord, an admirer of Gilpin, 50
LEVER, Thomas, a friend of Gilpin, 224
his advice to Queen Elizabeth, 225
LEWIN'S Life of Gilpin, Pref. vi
LISLE, Mr., of Biddick, entertains Gilpin during the plague, 226
LLANDAFF, Bishop of, accepted Elizabeth's supremacy, 117
LOUVAIN, Gilpin stays there some time, 62
LUTHER and Gilpin, 16, 259

MALT, consumption of, in olden times, 139
MARTYRS, in Mary's reign, 70
MARRIAGE of schoolmasters and clergy, 186
MARY, accession of Queen, 62
the martyrs of her reign, 70
MOORHOUSE coal-pits, 143
MORE, Sir Thos., and the Papal Supremacy, 8, 19
his character and principles, 10
his opinion of Tunstall, 53
on elementary education, 173
MORTON HOUSE, the seat of the Bellasis', 146

NEAL, meets Gilpin at Paris, 66
NEW LEARNING, 4
at Oxford and Cambridge, 5
Gilpin a disciple of, 9
NON-CONFORMISTS, origin of, 199
NORTH OF ENGLAND, state of Religion in, 149
Romanism still very general, 150
NORTON, Gilpin appointed to, 44
his work at, 54
the Collegiate Church, and description of the village, 59
mother parish of Stockton, 60

OXFORD, Gilpin's college, Queen's, 4
and the New Learning, 5
reactionary to the Reformation, 23
Peter Martyr sent there, 23
the disputation with him, 24
Plague at, 226
some of Gilpin's books left to Queen's College, 273

PAPAL SUPREMACY, More and Gilpin on, 19
PARLIAMENT of 1536, 7
its reforms, 8
PETER MARTYR, at Oxford, 23
disputation, 24
his opinion of Gilpin, 24
PILKINGTON, Bishop, sympathised with the Puritans, 198
and the rebellion of 1569, 210
deprived of the forfeited properties, 211
a great friend of Gilpin, 221
Strype's description of him, 222
interested in Gilpin's Tynedale work, 222
his death, 223
PLAGUE at Houghton and Oxford, 226
frequent in those days, reasons why, 227
PLURALITIES, and non-residence, 82
POLE, Cardinal, proposals for reforms, 93
suggests no doctrinal reforms, 94
POOR-LAWS, not enacted in Gilpin's time, 140
POPE and the Prayer Book, 29
excommunicates Queen Elizabeth, 215
is he Antichrist? 68
PRAYER BOOK and the Pope, 29,
PRISONS, Gilpin visiting, 142, 168
PULPITS, tuning the, 46
PURITANS, many of the Bishops and Church dignitaries were, 198
wish to convert Gilpin, 199
what we owe to them, 204

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, Gilpin goes to, 4

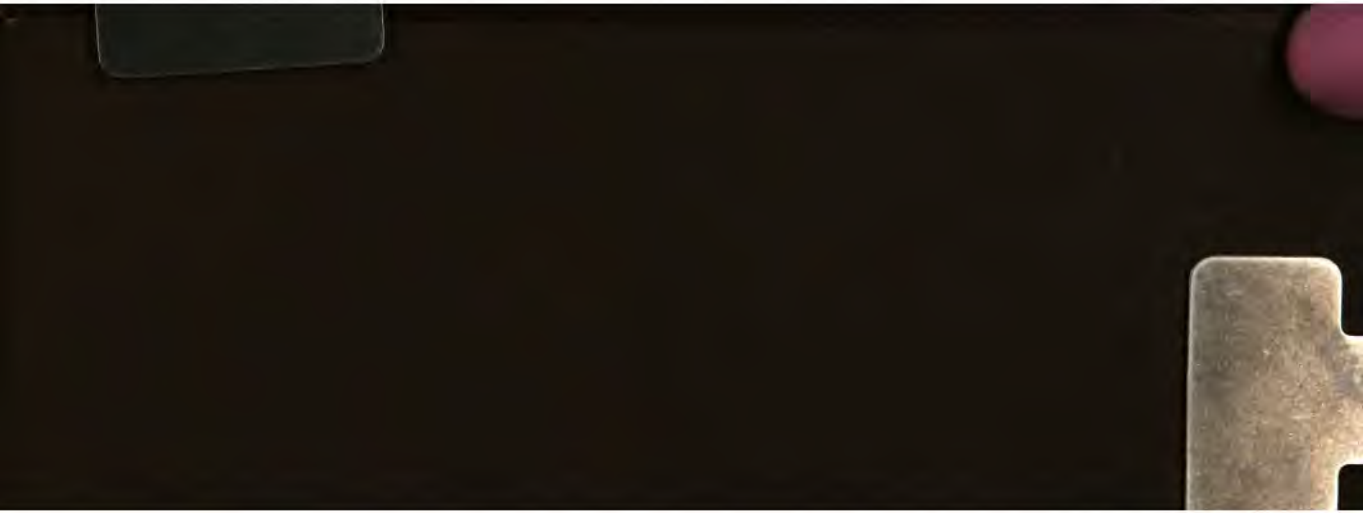
RAINTON coal-pits, 143
RAINTON hill, Lord Burleigh's view thence of Houghton, 216
REBELLION of 1569, its origin, 205
proceedings of the rebels, 206
the cry of the rebels, 208
soon at an end, 208
the reign of terror afterwards, 209
results of the failure of this Rebellion, 215
REFORMATION, trying to burn it out, 70
RELIGION, in the North of England, 148
and education at the Grammar School, 185
RIVINGTON SCHOOL, statutes of, 184
ROGERS, the first martyr in Mary's reign, 70
ROME, errors of, Gilpin on, 50
issues Bull of excommunication against Elizabeth, 118
ROMAN CATHOLICS forbidden to attend Church of England services in 1562, 118
finally stopped from doing so by Pope's Bull of excommunication against Queen Elizabeth, 213
actively proselytising, 247
ROTHBURY, Gilpin at, 164

SANITARY matters in Gilpin's days, 227
SANDYS, Bishop, urges Gilpin to accept Bishopric of Carlisle, 122
SCHISM of Rome from England, 214
SELSTHORP, Thomas, tries to bring Gilpin back to Romanism, 248
SERMONS, and their province in Gilpin's days, 45
SLANDERS against Gilpin, 265
SOUTH BIDDICK, Tithes, 144
STATUTES of the Grammar School, 183
STOCKTON, originally in Parish of Norton, 60

SUNDAY SCHOOLS unknown, 177
SURTEES' life of Gilpin, Pref. vi.

TOMB, altar, to Gilpin in Houghton church, 270
TRADITION, Trentine doctrine of, 31
TRENT, Council, hopes from, 22
stereotyping doctrine, 26
TUNSTALL, Bishop of Durham, Gilpin's great-uncle, in prison, 52
buying up Tyndale's New Testament, 54
very friendly to Gilpin, 54
his advice to Gilpin when unsettled in views, 55
fears that Gilpin will "die a beggar," 58
employs Gilpin to print some books for him, 58
released from prison by Mary, 62
offers a living to Gilpin, 63
urges Gilpin to return to England, 69
his latter days, 74, 75
his moderation, 76
warns Gilpin of the danger he incurred from the clergy, 88
Gilpin charged with heresy before him, 88
Gilpin again charged with heresy and acquitted, 107
somewhat alienated from Gilpin, 108
deprived under Elizabeth, 118
TWEDDELL'S life of Gilpin, Pref. vi.
TYNEDALE and Readsdale, the debatable land, 152
rapine and plunder universal, 152
priests as bad as people, 155
Bishop Fox's monitions, 155
notions of right and wrong, 157
the deadly feud, 157
change in the people within the last 80 or 90 years, 161
Gilpin's labour in, 162; wins their hearts, 167
the unpropitious circumstances of the people here in Gilpin's day, 168
TYNDALE sprung from Tynedale, 159
his New Testament, bought up by Tunstall, 52

UNIFORMITY of worship, measures for obtaining, 199

WESLEY, John, on boys' playing, 185
and Bernard Gilpin, 286
WHITGIFT, Archbishop, and Cartwright, 204
WHITTINGHAM, Dean, a Puritan, 198
his death, 245
WILL of Bernard Gilpin, 259
WILSON, Dr., named for Deanery of Durham, 246
WOLSEY'S death at Leicester, 113
WREN, Mr., attacks Gilpin, 263

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